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ABSTRACT

This survey evaluated the reading programs and reading instructors of 13 New Jersey community colleges and reviewed the research literature. Results of the survey indicate that the reading instructors, for the most part, are highly qualified. The survey found a disparity, however, between the remedial needs of typical community college students, as reported in research literature, and the reported reading program objectives of the surveyed schools. Although researchers and practitioners emphasize individualizing course objectives to correspond with students' needs, the surveyed schools generally focus on preselected skills and materials (usually comprehension skills and workbook materials) that force the students through a prescribed skills sequence. The evaluation procedures for a majority of the reading programs were judged as adequate, but the survey report concludes that a real need exists for reading instructors to be thoroughly trained in the procedures and importance of both diagnostic and evaluation procedures. Appendixes contain the names of the community colleges surveyed, the workbooks they reported using, and sample copies of the survey and cover letter. A list of references is included. (RL)

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A SURVEY OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE READING PROGRAMS AND PERSONNEL IN NEW JERSEY

A MASTERS EQUIVALENCY THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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RUTGERS

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

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Dedication

"Nothing that is so, is so" says Feste
"A natural perspective that is, and is not," cries Orsino.

Shakespeare

to the unfolding worlds of
Hana and Alicia

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM

Background

In the 1960's with the inception of open-admissions policies and more flexibility in admission requirements, developmental reading programs were established as an essential ingredient in the curriculum of most community colleges and universities (Anderson, 1975, Guilford, 1976). Leedy (1958) indicated that reading was not a very integral part of university study before the middle of the nineteenth century. Students were not encouraged to read independently, nor was there much in the way of required reading for most courses. The students were expected to attend lectures and to learn directly from professors.

Leedy (1958) documented the expansion of curricula in the sciences and humanities which called for more independent work and adequate reading skills to meet this demand. Slowly, reading programs began to be seen as an academic need, even in the best of our universities, in order to avoid many of the difficulties encountered in various academic fields.

In 1933, Buswell at the University of Chicago founded one of the first college level reading programs in the United States. Buswell (1937) then conducted one of the most intensive studies in adult reading resulting in the landmark report "How Adults Read." Harvard began a program in 1938, after which other colleges and universities followed suit (Geerlofs, 1967). In the last twenty years there has been a tremendous increase in the number both of developmental reading programs of the university and of adult literacy training programs.

Paralleling the growth and interest of developmental and remedial reading at the senior college has been almost unbridled growth of junior colleges in the 1960's and 1970's. The increasing numbers of community colleges have made higher education available to students of varying academic promise. The open door admission policy encourages students to begin degree programs without regard to previous experience, probable academic success, or level of academic skills (Henderson, 1976). Students have been found lacking in basic study skills and reading achievement (Cooke & Farrow, 1975, Maxwell, 1971b, Cartwright, 1971, and others). The establishment of various programs to improve study and reading skills has been extensive and is essential (Guilford, 1976, Anderson, 1975).

The rapid proliferation of programs has created a large demand for qualified personnel for the teaching of developmental reading courses and study skills at the community college and university. The instructors of reading improvement courses are given the responsibility of providing high-risk students with skills needed to accomplish both career and educational goals (Henderson, 1970). Because of the rapid development of these courses, they are frequently taught by personnel whose speciality is in a discipline other than reading and who know very little about the teaching of reading.

There have been various surveys of college and adult reading programs (Leedy, 1958, Geerlofs, 1967, and others). However, there has been a dearth of surveys assessing community college reading programs and personnel and none have focused on New Jersey.

Problem

Answers to the following questions were sought in the literature review and from the data base accumulated through the survey:

1. What are the objectives for reading programs for New Jersey community colleges?
2. What are the most common materials and methods and technological equipment used to meet specified objectives?

3. What is the relationship between literature research findings and specified objectives and materials of the survey?
4. What are the qualifications of the instructors? Do they meet the standards recommended in the literature?
5. What evaluation procedures are used to improve the course presentation and contents?

Importance of Study

A number of surveys of college reading programs have been conducted regarding number of programs, departments conducting the programs, materials used (Geerlofs, 1967). However, there have been no extensive surveys devoted primarily to community colleges encountered in the literature.

This survey on community colleges incorporates the same questions regarding objectives, materials, tests, length of course, and other pertinent data that were reported in the benchmark study on senior colleges by Geerlofs and Kling (1968). In addition, further information was sought regarding the department which conducts the course, the training of instructors, drop-out rates, and the type of course evaluation that is being used.

Definitions

1. Community college: a two year college. Community college is used interchangeably with the term, Junior College. It also refers to a school having a terminal two year program.
2. Reading improvement course: a reading course to improve reading performance regardless of reading level.
3. Developmental reading course: a reading course designed to continue the developmental nature of the reading process, that is, one can continue to develop better reading skills throughout one's life.
4. Remedial reading course: a reading course in which remediation of specific deficiencies is the primary objective.

Limitations

The survey was limited to New Jersey Community Colleges. There were limitations as to the type of questions asked and the survey format used.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Ten basic areas were reviewed: the psychology of reading, the goals and objectives of college reading programs, screening and diagnostic procedures used in the college reading programs, the classroom organization patterns of college reading programs, the criteria used to evaluate the reading program, a profile of the college reading teacher, the materials and techniques used in the reading programs, a review of various surveys of college-adult reading programs, and a review of the literature specific to community colleges reading programs.

The review is devoted mainly to college and adult reading programs because of the dearth of literature about community college reading programs. It was believed that the information on college and adult reading programs would have some applicability since many programs in the senior programs are offered in the first two years.

Psychology of Reading

Reading instruction in the twentieth century was dramatically influenced by research on the psychology of reading and more recently by research in other related academic disciplines such as linguistics (Smith, 1959). Spache (1956b) noted that the scientific investigation of reading and the reading process did not develop much before the middle of the nineteenth century.

The emphasis of this early period was upon a rather mechanistic interpretation of reading (Spache, 1956b). Reading was considered to be basically a perceptual act, that of quick recognition of words. This could be traced primarily to the research emphasis of the period which made attempts at understanding the physiology of reading. Investigations examined right and left dominance of hands and eyes, movements of the eye when reading, mirror-reading or mirror-writing tendencies, and similar physical elements possibly related to the reading act (Spache, 1956b). Subjects used in the investigations were almost exclusively adults and skilled readers (Huey, 1912).

One of the classic studies of the period by Cattell (1885) involved an investigation of processing tendencies of the eye through tachistoscopic exposures. He found that with a fast tachistoscopic exposure, a skilled reader can perceive four unconnected letters,

a very long word, and four or more words if they form a sentence. Dodge (1905) showed that perception occurs in reading only during fixations, and not at all during the saccadic jumps from one fixation to the next.

Buswell (1937) in a landmark study on adult reading conducted at the University of Chicago concluded that it was necessary to separate the thinking aspects of reading from the perceptual mechanisms that operate in reading. He concluded that "psychologically, reading is not a complicated situation. Basically, it is simply a form of perceptual experience followed by interpretations of varying degrees of importance" (p. 144). His studies on eye movements in adult readers concluded a vast and time-tested era of research on the psychological aspects of the reading process.

During this era of research, the reading act was thought of in terms of perception and in a relatively mechanistic way. Diagnosis of difficulties in reading took the form of examination of the physical and particularly the eye-movement characteristics of the learner (Spache, 1956b).

Remedial work consisted largely of rote memorization supplemented at first by various crude laboratory quick exposure devices, such as flashcards. With the increased technological developments of the eye-movement camera and refinements of the tachistoscope, diagnosis

of eye-movement patterns became more refined and remedial work was intended to increase both the speed and span of word recognition (Spache, 1956b). Experiments were conducted in which subjects were trained to fixate on columns of numbers, words or phrases, or on asterisks or vertical lines running through the page in the hope of retraining the fixation habits of the subjects. This was expected to transfer to their capacity for reading. Spache (1956b) concluded that "success in reading was considered largely a reflection of physical and inherited traits which could be modified best by physical or medical measures" (p. 14).

The teaching of beginning reading reflected this bias that reading was basically a perceptual or word recognition task. "The use of an alphabetic method was succeeded by a rote word method. . . . The almost exclusive use of oral reading, or what was really word-calling," (Spache, 1956b, p. 15) further showed their dependence upon this early concept of reading.

Adult developmental reading was a concept which had its beginnings in the work of Buswell (1937) at the University of Chicago. He initiated one of the first college level reading programs in 1933. As in the elementary levels, the primary emphasis of the early college programs was on perceptual training which it was hoped would have a transfer value to the reading process and

on the speed of reading which was thought to be affected by perceptual training. Dodge's conclusion (1905) that perception occurs in reading only during fixations lent itself very well to the research and teaching bias of the period.

Despite the mechanistic emphasis of the time period, some very important ideas were emerging which led to a modification of the definition of reading and a change in the objectives and practices of teaching the reading skills. Reading had been considered a simple perceptual process and skill which could be taught. However, Spache (1956b) identified four basic psychological facts which he derived from an examination of the studies of the period which led to a broader definition of the reading act:

1. Huey (1912) concluded that reading was performed in a series of short, quick movements and fixations across a page, not one continuous sweep across the page;
2. The length of the fixation pause was a reflection of various factors--familiarity with the subject material and the individual's reading ability (Cattell, 1885, Huey, 1912);
3. There is a degree of flexibility in the perceptual habits of the reader due to

various factors, but the ocular-motor habits of a reader tend to persist in many reading situations (Cattell, 1937, Huey, 1912); and

4. There are other eye movements besides the usual forward and regressive movements in the reading of materials (Spache, 1940).

The shift in thinking was gradual. The concept of reading was becoming more comprehension-oriented. Thorndike (1917) emphasized the idea that a facet of mature reading was reasoning. The area of testing grew in importance. Reading achievement tests emphasized comprehension of silent reading as much if not more than rate of reading or skill in word recognition (Spache, 1956b).

There was a questioning of the value of oral reading as opposed to silent reading in the teaching of reading. Research seemed to indicate that an early emphasis upon silent reading was desirable. Spache (1956b) listed nine major points established by research findings in this era as follows:

1. Children are able to read more rapidly silently than orally by the fourth grade (Judd et al., 1918);
2. There is a tendency to subvocalize;
3. Subvocalization tends to decrease with greater proficiency in reading;

4. The span of recognition is from one to two and one-half words (Buswell, 1937);
5. The span of perception in tachistoscopic exposure for adults is from four to five words of unrelated text with an increase of about one word in meaningful context (Buswell, 1937);
6. The exact process by which words are perceived is not entirely clear. There are three possible explanations--the context provides a meaningful cue; the word is the unit; and significant letters act as cues (Huey, 1912, Buswell, 1937);
7. Comprehension is a reasoning process, a synthesizing (Thorndike, 1917);
8. Comprehension is largely determined by the reader's background (Hilliard, 1924); and
9. Vocabulary growth is related to other cognitive functions (Gray & Holmes, 1938).

Spache (1956b) noted that during the 1930-1950 period, the definition of the act of reading was extending even further. Critical flexible reading was encouraged to promote evaluations of an author's presentation. Reading was seen as a means lending itself to an end of new insights and improved patterns of thinking and behavior. Researchers began to identify

the need for flexibility in reading, to be able to adjust to various texts and to one's own purposes in reading (McDonald, 1957).

Reading tests were analyzed. Some researchers began to break down reading into various component parts in order to better investigate and understand the reading process. The growing dependence on the standardized reading tests for diagnosis and measurement of academic achievement led to an emphasis on the reading skills measured by reading tests in both research and instruction.

Some insights listed by Spache (1956b) derived from the research of this period were as follows:

1. Very little is understood about the mental processes involved in reading for different purposes or how to promote the growth of the skills necessary for flexible reading (McDonald, 1963a, 1958a, 1957);
2. There may be a marked relationship between the reader's ability to associate words and ideas and his rate of learning (Bear & Odbert, 1940, Traxler, 1934); and
3. The factors most frequently identified in relation to reading were vocabulary, intelligence, the ability to see verbal relationships, and perceptual, verbal fluency

(Wrightstone, 1940).

Spache (1956b) stressed that as reading instruction emphasized training in how to think, success in reading was gradually seen to be markedly affected by the attitudes, feelings, prejudices, and general adjustment of the reader. This concept of viewing reading as one aspect of the total growth of an individual characterizes the current psychological explanation of reading (Olson, 1940).

In the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's, there was a tremendous proliferation in research into the reading process in all aspects of reading. A relatively new development in the field was the increased interest in model building and reading theory.

Other academic disciplines were contributing to the understanding of the reading process. Disciplines such as linguistics provided additional frameworks for present research and have added a greater depth and dimension to many of the proposed reading models and theories.

Williams (1965) questioned the applicability of some of the research presently being conducted, whether or not it was going to contribute to the pedagogy of the teaching of reading, and whether there is not so much research being conducted that we are presently getting diminishing returns for the amount of the research that

is being done.

Goals and Course Objectives

Buswell, who engineered the reading program at the University of Chicago in the 1930's and who conducted a landmark study in the understanding of eye movements in adults (1937), clearly identified reading as a perceptual act and spearheaded the development and focus of adult reading on to perceptual training. Buswell (1957) explained that:

> the unique characteristic of reading lies in its perception rather than comprehension. Comprehension is an overall factor that applies to listening and thinking as well as reading. The new element encountered in the learning of reading is the perceptual recognition of the printed verbal system. (p. 103)

From the studies of eye movements by Buswell and Judd and others in the 1920's and 1930's, there was evidence that poor readers go about various reading tasks in the same inflexible way, whereas good readers adapt their rate and method, that is, their eye movements, of reading to the purpose at hand.

From these beginnings, college level reading programs focused their attention primarily on developing the speed of reading of students through the training of eye movements and perceptual behavior. Publications concerning college reading programs were very difficult to find in the literature until the Southwest Reading Conference, concerned with college and adult level

reading programs, was initiated in 1952.

Eller (1956) noted that there had been major changes in the goals of college and adult reading programs since 1952. The changes were in the direction of a broader concept of reading as more than a purely perceptual process. He felt that the concern was with the more intellectual comprehension skills essential to high level understanding encountered in college courses. He listed the following critical areas which many college level reading courses had as goals:

1. critical reading ability;
2. facility with the study skills; and
3. abilities in organization and generalization.

Eller (1956) noted that there had been a change in the emphasis of vocabulary development to the teaching of specific vocabulary which was of more immediate value and more relevant to the needs of the students. Also, the semantic variation of words was usually an aspect of vocabulary development. Eller (1956) stated that another goal of study skills courses just emerging was some sort of training in listening since college students have to learn a great deal by listening to lectures.

Instruction was starting to focus more on the individual student and the concept of teaching reading in various content areas was taking form. The original

concern with the relationship between eyesight and reading was giving way to the more inclusive problem of the correlation between visual perception and reading.

Worth (1956) listed the preliminary considerations for setting up a reading program in the junior college. She emphasized that the differences in planning for a junior college as opposed to a university were that the concept of a junior college was based on service to the community and established to provide post-high school education for the youth and also for the adult population of the community. Because this involved a student body with a wider cross section of interests and levels of ability, Worth explained the need for diversification in the types of reading improvement courses offered in the community college.

Worth (1956) wrote that certain questions must be answered before arriving at decisions concerning the type of reading program that would be offered at the junior college. These questions were as follows:

1. Is there a need for a reading program according to student opinion and faculty recommendation and test results?
2. Will the program be required or voluntary?
3. Will it be remedial or developmental or a combination?

4. Will credit be offered?
5. Will there be fees?
6. What diagnostic procedures will be used?
7. How will the course itself be evaluated?
8. What criteria will be used to evaluate the course?

Kingston (1959) added a number of other considerations for someone interested in establishing a reading program. They included the length of time a student was to be enrolled in the program, the selection of the students, the instructional procedure to be used, and the cost of such a service.

Worth (1956) in her study presented in condensed form goals listed by the twenty-one junior colleges that she surveyed. There were nine goals, several of which were closely interrelated:

1. Understanding the needs of the students through diagnostic procedures and individual conferences.
2. Establishment of remedial procedures more closely allied to diagnostic findings.
3. Making use of planned bibliotherapy when the need is indicated.
4. Teaching the mechanics of reading and good reading habits.
5. Teaching basic reading skills. . . .
6. Teaching good study habits and study skills.
7. Teaching listening techniques.
8. Improving the self-confidence of the reader. . . . the keeping of progressive records of his reading activities by the student. . . .
9. Cultivation of the ability and desire to read widely. . . . (p. 106)

McDonald (1957) re-emphasized the concept of reading that moved toward continually broader interpretations and pointed out that remedial programs at the college level must similarly broaden their objectives. The complexity of the reading process means that a successful reading improvement program would have many outcomes, equally complex in their nature and consequence. Nonetheless, this trend towards emphasizing individualization of the reading programs in the literature does not necessarily limit the goals of the program even though it might make it more difficult to adequately evaluate the effects of the programs.

Sommerfeld (1957) noted that the trends in college reading programs questioned the speed orientation still a part of many reading programs. He pointed out that speed may be over-emphasized since it is how well one reads that really counts, not how fast nor how much. Miller (1957), also recognized the danger of over-emphasis on reading rate, but on the other hand, she warned against the problem of the individual who seems unable to make any material progress in increasing his reading rate because of his concern with the loss of comprehension. She raised the question of how to decrease the fear of cmprehension loss and yet to maintain the importance of idea content in reading. Pauk (1958) also felt that rate should be an ingredient of a reading

program but that it should be placed in proper perspective. He saw rate as a tool to provide greater flexibility of speed by extending the range of reading speeds that a student could utilize. He acknowledged that there were different speeds for skimming, for skipping, for reading varied content for varied purposes. Mazurkiewicz (1958) explained that the emphasis of college reading programs should be on corrective reading, on the development of vocabulary, and on the critical study-type skills, not on speed.

Pauk (1958) concurred with Miller (1957) that there were degrees of comprehension: that a reader did not necessarily have to comprehend all materials at the same level. "The depth of comprehension depends whether we read for recreation, for background or for complete understanding" (Pauk, 1958, p. 46). Along these lines, Paul argued that we must teach basic reading skills in terms of the students' subjects. He felt that many reading problems revolved around the student's inability to apply the basic skills, rather than their ignorance of the skills. He listed nine basic skills which appeared in the Forty-seventh Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education (The Yearbook Committee, 1948): 1) vocabulary; 2) inference of words and meanings; 3) getting meaning from a sentence; 4) grouping words and phrases meaningfully; 5) following written

directions; 6) flexibility in speed of reading; 7) retaining meaning of what has been read; 8) organizing material; and 9) skimming.

There is a need to teach these skills as a means for achieving higher levels of meaning rather than as ends in themselves (Pauk, 1958). Davis (1959) also recognized the need to teach for transfer and thus to make the situations in training as similar as possible to real situations.

Brigham (1959) emphasized that instruction should utilize and guide toward independent student work for the following sequence in reading: 1) establishing specific purposes; 2) utilizing experience and information; 3) understanding organizational pattern of materials; 4) gaining flexibility in reading rate; 5) student evaluations; 6) checking as necessary; and 7) review. Nonetheless, it was important to offer opportunities to develop skills in reasoning, vocabulary and syllogistic reasoning; organization of materials, flexibility of reading rates, use of reference materials; and study skills such as previewing, outlining, summarizing.

Maxwell (1963a) pursued the line of argument that speed of reading is affected by many factors including the purpose for which the person is reading. Because a study analyzing grade improvement by subjects

revealed that students who took a college reading course earned higher grades in social science and literature, than a control group, but that the reading course failed to affect their grades in science and mathematics, Maxwell suggested that college reading programs may have little relation to the skills involved in science and mathematics courses.

She also questioned whether the reading needs of college freshman result from deficiencies that go back to high school or are new needs arising because of the differences of college demands. She called for research to elucidate whether there were different skills needed by college sophomores, juniors, seniors, and graduate students and a reappraisal of the goals and objectives of college reading programs.

Rankin (1963) found that there was a general consensus that it was unwise to try to improve reading rate among students deficient in comprehension skills. However, Rankin found that poor readers might benefit from speed reading at college level even before their comprehension was brought up to a desired level.

McDonald (1963a) suggested that much of the disagreement is the consequence of dealing with rate of reading and comprehension of reading as independent or co-equal entities. He maintained that they are neither, but that both are interdependent constructs. Maxwell

(1963a) supported McDonald's position that reading rate and comprehension level were interactions involving the purposes of the reader, the reading ability of the reader, and the difficulty of the material. McDonald (1963a) pointed out that reading flexibility was an essential skill for high-level reading.

McDonald (1971) later developed the concept of reading versatility over a twelve year period. Reading flexibility was defined in terms of reading rate flexibility. Rate flexibility assumed that a reader could automatically change his rate of reading without changing his purpose for reading and that directing a student to read better would promote a corresponding increase in comprehension. Research has not supported these contentions and has led to a need to redefine reading flexibility.

McDonald (1971) used the term reading versatility:

> to describe the ability on the part of the reader to utilize those patterns of processing reading inputs which are appropriate for the style, difficulty level, content and theme of the reading material at hand, while also being consonant with achieving the reader's purpose to the optimum level of his physiological and psychological performance. (p. 169)

Thus as the concept of reading becoming broader, the concept of reading comprehension was being re-evaluated to include the other variables that affected reading comprehension.

Pepper (1971) outlined the evolution of the objectives of the reading courses at Wayne State University from 1941. Initially, the classes were voluntary, non-credit, and non-remedial for the average or better reader with no provision for individual diagnosis or instruction. The training focused on the development of more efficient visual skills. Exercises were designed to develop smooth or rhythmic eye movement patterns. Course evaluations indicated that the mechanical techniques utilized did increase rate of reading without a loss of comprehension for a large number of students.

In order to meet the varied needs of a heterogeneous university population separate classes in study skills were added in 1943 and vocabulary development in 1948. Individual attention and counseling gradually involved more of the staff's time (Pepper, 1971). In 1953, the courses were combined into a reading efficiency, study skills, and vocabulary course with the establishment of a reading laboratory to handle students with special problems. The goal of the basic course, in 1971, according to Pepper, focused on developing the necessary skills and attitudes for dealing with the range of college studies. The areas stressed are flexibility in rate, study-type reading, vocabulary-development, and efficient study techniques.

Crist (1975) found that vocabulary development was one of the most pressing needs of academically disadvantaged college freshmen in a developmental reading course. She argued that unlike many skills these students lack, vocabulary building is one they are eager to perfect. Because of this ready-made motivation, she recommended the use of vocabulary clinics to improve vocabulary. Guilford (1976) divided the course content of the Texas Southern reading program into the basic areas of study skills, comprehension, and vocabulary development.

Spache (1959b) pointed out three types of reading programs: 1) a machine or skills-oriented program with the primary emphasis on improving the reading act; 2) a program with a broader conception of reading that stresses insights, skills, and counseling in equal proportions; and 3) clinical programs which focus almost exclusively on psychotherapeutic approaches. He recommended employing all the approaches in varying degrees according to the goals of the course.

To conclude this section on the goals and objectives of community college programs, we will refer to some of the reasons why it is necessary to teach reading at the college level. Harris (1957) gave the following reasons:

1. Reading is a process never completely mastered; there is always room for improvement;
2. Due to increased reading demands, reading efficiency and flexibility must be taught at all levels;
3. In order to maintain a high level of proficiency and efficiency in reading, there must be continuous and specific practice; and
4. Tests of college students reveal that their reading skills are far below their potential and the level necessary to function academically at college.

Screening and Diagnostic Practices

Spache (1956a) identified five practices that were used in identifying poor readers in college. He clarified the concept that the methods used for selecting those pupils who needed help should be closely related to the kind of help available for corrective and remedial training. He explained that if regular classroom teachers were to assume responsibility for such training, then gross methods of selection and diagnosis would be sufficient. The five diagnostic techniques that Spache enumerated are as follows:

1. Mental Age Standards: Spache felt that direct comparisons between mental age and reading test scores were not feasible, nor is it known how great the difference must be to be considered critical;
2. Monroe Index: The average of the chronological age and mental age and arithmetic-computation age were compared with the pupil's reading age. Like the Mental Age Standard there were possibilities for making gross errors;
3. Case-study: This involved a study of the probable causes of reading difficulty of a student. Spache felt that this was an excellent method but so demanding that it probably could only be used in clinics after preliminary diagnostic procedures had already been used;
4. Standardized tests: Probably the most common method of identifying poor readers in college. This type of test should be used only as a crude approximation of indicating pupils who appear to be retarded in the particular skills measured by the test. Spache cautioned against using the results of these tests to indicate a student's abilities in any of a half dozen fields of

study;

5. Informal inventory: This consisted of a series of graded reading selections drawn from a specific content field such as physics, history, or psychology. The scope of the inventory could be broadened to include measures of technical vocabulary, auditory comprehension, and others. The strong points of this type of inventory were that it deals with materials of a specific field by identifying the various levels of material in the content field that pupils can handle.

Spache (1956a) explained that "all these efforts together, however, do not constitute a complete diagnosis of all the factors affecting reading success. The causes of some pupils' difficulties will still be unknown" (p. 132).

Many of the special programs for students who manifest basic academic skill deficiencies operate under the premise that individualized instruction be provided in order to meet the diverse needs of the students. An accurate individualized assessment of the student's entry skills is essential so that appropriate activities and materials can be assigned. Drummond, Kent, and Pinette (1975) pointed out the need to assess a student's

personality before placing him in an individualized reading program. They referred to the literature which reported a different array of needs for poor readers as compared to good readers based upon their responses to personality tests.

Drummond et al. (1975) investigated the internal-external control construct[1] as related to student achievement in an individualized community college reading course. Thirty freshmen were identified as either externally or internally oriented based upon their scores on the Internal-External Scale. Each student was assigned an individualized reading program after proper diagnostic procedures evaluated his reading skills. Post-test results indicated that the external-oriented students had achieved more than the internal-oriented students.

A sensitivity to individual differences is an important, if not essential, aptitude for reading teachers to possess; however, student differences are only important from an instructional point of view, that is, if the students need to be taught in different ways. "Nevertheless, significant learning often does depend

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[1]When a student believes that reinforcement is contingent upon his own behavior, he believes in internal control; when he believes that reinforcement is contingent on chance or other people, he believes in external control.

upon a modification of educational strategy" (Drummond et al., 1975, p. 37). Thus, if diagnostic procedures of personality components contribute significantly to a student's performance in an individualized reading program, then instructional methods and materials should be determined on the basis of this type of information as well as on the basis of scholastic information.

Maxwell (1971b) explained that the dynamics of personality, motivation, and interpersonal relationships all contribute to and influence a student's reading performance in college. She recommended intensive counseling in order to change student's habits or enhance their chances of succeeding academically. She documented that personality types correlated highly with various types of reading behaviors. The only effective diagnostic procedure for personality assessment, according to Maxwell, was for reading specialists to possess counseling skills in order to be more effective in changing reading and study skill behavior.

Hafner (1964) explained another diagnostic technique for college reading programs. He indicated that the cloze procedure as an index of a student's ability to read with comprehension. Rankin (1959) concluded that the cloze procedure was a reliable technique for measuring readability of a textbook or passage, intelligence, pre-reading knowledge, and various components

of reading comprehension. There were very high correlations with cloze scores and other measures of reading comprehension in both pre- and post-test comprehension scores. Hafner (1964) found that the cloze scores compared favorably with standard predictors as a predictor of course grades and that cloze scores correlated positively and significantly with measures of intelligence, vocabulary, information, and course marks.

Diagnostic procedures in college reading programs are varied. The most common diagnostic tool is a standardized reading test. Consensus is that there is no one standardized test that has been developed which is both reliable and valid enough to measure all the variables of college and adult readers. There are a number of factors which affect reading test scores and the validity of test results. They have been identified as personality characteristics (McDonald, 1960b, Rankin, 1963, Drummond et al., 1975, Mzxwell, 1971b); purpose of the test and reader (Davis, 1961, Maxwell, 1965); testing conditions (Davis, 1960): attitudes of the test taker (Harris, 1964); and passage dependency and independency of the test (Preston, 1964, Pyrczak, 1972, and Tuinman, 1973). Another glaring weakness of standardized tests for college reading improvement programs is their failure to measure many of the primary skill goals of such programs (Anderson, 1975). Skills such as purpose, reading

flexibility, retention are often not measured by tests (Maxwell, 1971b).

Nonetheless, standardized tests are the most reliable, economical, and feasible measures of group reading achievement that are available. Tests must be used cautiously with respect to their limited validity and supplemented by information from them with other clinical diagnostic procedures that provide data on other variables such as personality, individual skill deficiencies, and motivation.

A review of the standardized tests for college and adult readers in the Mental Measurement Yearbooks revealed that, despite their limitations, some tests are more reliable, more valid, and more applicable to the college situation than others. Geerlofs (1967) found from a review of the Mental Measurement Yearbook in 1940, 1953, 1959, and 1965, that the Cooperative English Test C2: Reading Comprehension, the Nelson-Denny Reading Test, and the Davis Reading Test appeared to be the most psychometrically sound of those available for college and adult readers.

Tillman (1973) presented an annotated review of four year college reading improvement programs from 1941-1971 and found the Iowa Silent Reading Test, the Nelson-Denny Reading Test, and the Cooperative Reading Test to be among the three most frequently used.

Kingston (1965) pointed to recent trends in the development of a more adequate, broader, more complete psychology of reading. However, he emphasized that these advances and developments in research capabilities had little impact on the measurement or instruction of reading. He noted that there is little difference between the tests widely used today and those of twenty-five years ago with the possible exception of measures of flexibility of reading. He conducted a rather crude study comparing students' written responses to selections from the Survey Section of the Diagnostic Reading Test with the content of multiple choice items developed by the test constructor. He found that the students omitted facts deemed significant by the person writing the standardized test items and tended to write general statements about what they had read. He concluded by asking, "Does the reading test test reading as the classroom teacher or reading specialist sees reading?" (p. 109).

McDonald (1966) asserted that it was high time to abandon the constructs "of rate, vocabulary, and comprehension as exemplified by most standardized reading tests" (p. 218). He indicated that, instead, there was a need to have reading tests that point out "how well the student can achieve his purpose for reading" (p. 218). The important information that testing should

provide has to do with the following:

1. The conditions and kinds of reading materials with which a student is able to achieve his purposes;
2. The flexibility of the reading style of the student; and
3. The deficiencies which make it difficult for a student to read effectively.

This assumes that the selection of the testing materials are suitable and specific to the amount and type of appraisal wanted. It may not be sufficient to measure reading performance on a single test (Kingston, 1965, McDonald, 1958a). Measurement should be made:

> under conditions which clearly define the purpose for which the reading is being done, with quite different instruments being available for assuring that the several important but very different purposes for which reading is done are in fact achieved. (McDonald, 1971, p. 170)

McDonald (1971), as Kingston (1965) had six years earlier, emphasized that college reading testing depended on the use of the same four or five tests which were current from fifteen to twenty years before and which measured some kind of reading in terms of the constructs rate, comprehension, and vocabulary. Farr (1971) in his analysis of reading comprehension tests concluded that the tests attempted to measure reading comprehension as a thought-getting process which is

generally unrelated to specific reading purposes. The tests were developed as if there was a well-known theoretical construct called reading comprehension.

Spache (1969) outlined the historical context from which these tests developed: rate of reading was considered as a separate aspect of reading behavior; training in reading rate spilled over into the comprehension area; practice in answering types of comprehension questions will transfer to permanent gains in comprehension skills; and comprehension was thought of as a relatively constant ability regardless of the materials.

McDonald (1971) re-emphasized that reading performance should focus on reading versatility. This should be accomplished in a number of task-oriented situations and must be supplemented with other kinds of assessment. Farr (1971) concurred that "the only validity of any importance is how well a test predicts a student's ability to perform functional reading tasks" (p. 196).

Nacke (1971) reviewed the various methods of assessing flexibility in reading. He identified four major issues:

1) the difficulty in measuring the strategies involving the constraints of the faster reading rates;
2) the perennial problem of measuring the rate of comprehension when considering flexible,

efficient reading;

3) the question whether in the measurement procedure there should be variation in the purpose of reading or in the difficulty and type of materials; and

4) the development of an index or scale so that the various rate and comprehension measures can be integrated into the construct of over-all reading ability.

If our conceptualization of mature reading is to emphasize flexibility and efficiency in reading tasks, then it is imperative to develop adequate tools to measure the behavior. The tools presently available are in need of further refinement and development.

Measuring the competence of adult readers has run into similar difficulties. It is unlikely that an adult reader will perform proficiently when tested with materials outside of his functional context (Braun & Neilsen, 1973). Diagnostic and testing procedures must be developed to allow for adequate and appropriate and reliable measures to be taken.

Classroom Organization of College Reading Programs

In her review, Entwistle (1960) noted that required study skills courses show the smallest gains in criterion performance. The evidence on students in

required courses indicated that required courses at the college level frequently involved students of rather probationary status.

Brigham (1959) did not concern himself with the voluntary nature of the reading program. He indicated that class organization by groups is probably most efficient. Group composition should be along the lines of similar achievement ranges in reading and types of difficulties and goals. Flexible grouping patterns were seen as essential in order to be able to accommodate different rates of progress and more specific individual needs. Brigham recommended that the size of classes should range from 8 to 12 students depending upon the relative extent of the reading problems of the individuals within the group and the training and competence of the instructor, but that it is possible to accommodate from 15 to 20 students at one time.

Brethower (1968) described what he called the cafeteria course because the organization of the courses was very flexible, allowing the students to come and go as they wished. Within limits, the students are allowed to set their own goals and define their own schedule. It is a highly individualized course in developing reading study skills. Students determine goals, content, sequence, duration, and even the details of the teaching materials used in the course. The course organization

attempts to provide the students with materials that they require to do their work. The course is voluntary, non-credit, and free. It is usually taken in addition to a normal course load.

Maxwell (1971b) argued that there must be a place in developmental reading programs for counseling in order to help students acquire the insights which must precede and accompany any dramatic changes in their reading and studying behavior. Spache (1951) in discussing trends in reading programs suggested that there would be a decreasing use of mechanistic and drill procedures accompanied by an increasing dependence upon counseling and psychotherapeutic techniques. Spache argued that the implication in this was that the primary purpose of such reading courses was to improve the adjustment of the student to the demands of college life.

Ridenour (1974) outlined the procedures and structure for an individualized reading and study skills program. In line with Mzxwell's recommendation for providing counseling, Ridenour changed the name of instructor to counselor in order to keep the role in perspective. She recommended close contact through conferences and small group discussion as incentives to keep students most deficient in reading skills from dropping the course. Ridenour recognized the need for some students to have a continual one-to-one relationship

through tutors as well as immediate help and feedback.

Anderson (1971) recognized three variations in how to individualize a reading program:

1. To help the students read a textbook;
2. To help the student with special reading workbooks and manuals;
3. To help the student in terms of reading skill deficiencies and needs.

Regardless of the plan or combination of plans used for individualizing a reading program, there are certain concepts and aspects of the procedure that are similar: learning begins where the student is; reading is an independent activity; and, students learn at different rates and in different ways. Thus each student's program should be tailored to specific needs with a continual evaluation process in order to monitor the progress of each student.

Cooke and Farrow (1975) espoused their credo: "We believe that individualized instruction is the only viable route to meeting the range of needs found in our classrooms" (p. 214). They explained that most teachers lacked "the diagnostic sense" to tease out a student's pattern of needs and complained of the sterile skills materials on the market. In essence, their message was that individualized instruction was probably more difficult to do well but the satisfaction that it gave was

well worth the energy and the effort expended.

To conclude this topic of classroom organization the wide variety of instructional needs in college reading courses became very evident in the 1960's with open admissions policies and greater educational opportunities (Schick, 1962). The trend towards individualization was noted by many instructors and researchers in the field. Henderson (1976) reported the wide diversity of procedures all placing themselves under the rubric of individualized instruction. In a survey reported by Olsen and Swiss (1976) 40 percent of the community colleges considered individualization to be the strongest aspect of their reading programs.

One important area included in many individualized programs was counseling (Spache, 1959, Maxwell, 1971, 1972). Olsen and Swiss (1976) reported that 87 percent of two-year colleges made individual counseling and conferences between students and reading program staff an integral part of the program. Apparently, with an expanding technology, increased attention on identifying individual deficiencies through standardized and clinical diagnostic procedures, and a felt need to provide counseling services to help overcome some of the barriers causing reading and study difficulties, we are in an era when instruction is being developed to meet individual needs.

Evaluation of Programs

The criteria used for the evaluation of a reading program should be seen in the perspective of why the program was established and what it is expected to do in terms of the goals and objectives of the program. The criteria should be measurable logical outcomes of the process being developed in the course.

Worth (1956), after conducting a survey of twenty-one junior colleges, suggested the following four criteria in order to evaluate the validity of the goals of a junior college reading program:

1. The program must fit into the philosophy of the institution where it is and must enhance the progress and prestige of that college;
2. The program must result in more effective living and learning for the students taking part;
3. The program should remain in touch with research concerning the teaching of reading and apply all that is applicable in the process of the various courses; and
4. The reading teacher should influence the attainment of the goals of the program, i.e., the personal qualifications of the person responsible for the program should affect

its degree of success.

McDonald (1957) explained that the complexity of reading means that a reading improvement program would have many equally complex outcomes. This would augment the difficulty of adequately evaluating the effects of reading programs. Nonetheless, fully aware of the complexity of the reading process, Robinson (1950) strongly asserted that "academic performance is clearly the sine qua non for the validation of remedial reading courses, particularly in liberal arts curricula where by far the largest portion of scholastic agenda comprises reading or related activities" (p. 83). McDonald realized that there are many valuable outcomes of college reading programs which have nothing to do with academic grade-point averages. Also, many of the goals of reading programs are not directly related to or capable of immediate translation in grades.

Regardless of the weaknesses of academic marks, they have become the standard accepted measure of student achievement at college. Many administrators, instructors and students operate on the assumption that there is a relationship between the reading programs and academic achievement. In fact, many of the programs were established in response to the influx of students unprepared to do college-level work. The programs were developed to help these students who could not do college work.

Thus it is conceptually logical for studies to make performance a criterion of the success of reading and study-skills programs. One of the difficulties encountered is that these studies have not consistently been properly controlled and evaluated.

Entwistle (1960) found it intuitively appealing that improved study habits would lead to increased academic effectiveness. The literature abounds with experiments on transfer of training which show that some very general kinds of study skills, such as reasoning, reflective thinking and ability to memorize can be taught and effectively transferred to new situations. As early as 1945, Entwistle (1960) noted that it was becoming clear that remedial reading courses at the college level were probably helpful.

In her review of twenty-two evaluations of study-skills courses, Entwistle (1960) found that even though the criteria used to determine the effectiveness of the courses were different, they all included a measure of overall scholastic average. She indicated that to continue checking grade point averages for a number of semesters following the course with adequate controls would provide the best evaluation. Other criteria which could be used with care were drop-out rate in the course, scores on pre- and post-reading tests, and study habits inventories.

Maxwell (1963a) pointed to a study which evaluated the grade improvement by subject and found that college students having taken a reading improvement course achieved higher grades in social science and literature but not in the sciences and mathematics, as compared to a control group. This indicated a need to look more closely at academic improvement rather than at over-all grade point average.

Brethower (1968) stated that for his cafeteria course the general criterion was in terms of grade point averages and percentages of students remaining in school. The general objective of the course was to help the students make use of their academic opportunities. Within the course itself, however, individuals developed their own goals which might have little to do with grade point average. If an individual's goals were met, then for him the course is a success to the extent that the student's goals were appropriate. The course was seen as a living system and was evaluated in terms of what it did; change being one of the steadfast goals (Brethower, 1968).

Maxwell (1972), interested in developing statistical procedures which would adequately evaluate living systems, as Brethower (1968) described his cafeteria course, came up with Bayesian techniques. Maxwell stated that because of the individualized nature of the reading improvement programs, "even if we could be sure

that our pre-tests reflected the students' abilities and problems, it would be difficult to envisage a single treatment program that would meet each of their needs, nor could we reasonably expect that by administering a standardized post-test we would find statistically significant changes" (p. 4). Since treatment plans were focused on different needs, post-testing would have to control for this. At the present time, this is beyond the capability of our standardized instruments.

She concluded that the most practical, most expedient measure of a program's effectiveness was attendance for a six-week period since it took at least six weeks for the average student to show progress. Ketcham (1963) recommended using the drop-out rate as a criterion measure of reading courses.

Maxwell (1971a) wrote that it was generally accepted as a foregone conclusion that if courses on study skills were offered to students deficient in those skills, their academic records would improve. However, she pointed out that very few researchers or reading programs have systematically and reliably assessed grade point averages in recent years. Maxwell emphasized that objectives should be clearly defined and specific criterion tasks consistent with the objectives of the program be described. Most important, reading programs should meet the needs of the individual students who

want help and should assist them in meeting their goals within appropriate limits.

Anderson (1975) clarified the importance of grade-point average as a criterion measure of a program's success and raised the possibility of excluding science and mathematics from grade point average in order to have a more valid measure of the effectiveness of the program. The main reason given for excluding science and mathematics was because reading improvement courses ignore these areas. He also suggested using additional criteria such as attendance, classroom interaction, drop-out rate, grade point average over more than one semester, pre- and post-test gain.

Burgess, Cranney, and Larsen (1976) indicate that it was important to keep in mind that grade point averages were only part of a larger context of possible outcomes. They report that the actual amount of change in relation to grade point average would be very small, but nonetheless significant. They questioned whether this might not be due to motivation factors.

Farrell (1975) reported an investigation by Stelle Feuers in 1969 which related reading comprehension and academic achievement in a community college of Los Angeles. There were no significant relationships between the college grade point average and reading comprehension scores as measured by the Nelson-Denny and

the Davis Reading Test or between grade point average and vocabulary. The correlations between the grade point average and vocabulary were significant at the .01 level but not substantial enough to predict academic success. The reading comprehension and vocabulary scores accounted for less than 10 per cent of the variance in college grade point average.

Fairbanks reviewed 79 college reading programs to determine the factors which contributed to grade point averages (Farrell, 1975). She noted that programs which significantly affected student achievement had a few common elements: they tended to stress how to get the main idea from paragraphs and longer selections; how to differentiate fact from opinion; and how to recognize and interpret inferences. The program tended to be voluntary with no credits, lasting for 40 or more hours with individualized coursework in which the students had a hand in their own diagnosis and selection of materials. An interesting finding was that study courses were not found to be an important factor in making a program successful as indicated by improved grade point average.

Nevertheless, the majority of studies which do use grade point average as the criterion for evaluating the effectiveness of reading improvement and study skills courses do show an increase in grade point

average which persists over time (Entwistle, 1960, McDonald, 1957, Wright, 1962, Tillman, 1973, Burgess et al., 1976).

The statistical design of many of the evaluative studies has been problematic (Anderson, 1975, Tillman, 1973, Maxwell, 1972, Entwistle, 1960, and others). There was very little control for the Hawthorne effect, regression to the mean, and other spurious effects. According to some estimations, more than 80 per cent of the studies dealing with the evaluation of progress in reading have serious contamination effects due to Hawthorne and placebo effects (McDonald, 1964). Wright (1962) found only eleven of thirty-two studies evaluating the relationship between reading improvement and grade point average with comparable control groups. One of the major variables not controlled for was motivation (Maxwell, 1972). Maxwell (1972) also pointed out that the statistical design of many investigations assumed a normal distribution while the population was of less able readers.

An article entitled "How Much do Community College Students Learn from their Textbooks" by Spring (1975) should be reviewed in light of the previous discussion. She found that over 50 per cent of students at all reading levels, such as the independent, instructional, and frustration levels as defined by the

Bormuth criteria of the cloze test, felt that they could get more than half of the information of the test elsewhere. When reading level in a text was related to the grade received in the course, the following breakdown was found:

TABLE 1

READING LEVEL, STUDENT ASSESSMENT OF TEXT, AND COURSE GRADES*

Reading Level on Cloze	N	Student says test is difficult (per cent)	Course Grade A	B	C	Other Grade
Independent	88	14	47%	36%	11%	6%
Instruction	30	23	50%	33%	10%	7%
Frustration	36	39	39%	33%	25%	3%

*Source: Spring, K. W. How much do community college students learn from their text books? Journal of Reading, 1975, 19, 131-136.

Spring concluded on the basis of her data that the text apparently played a limited role in the course, attesting to the primacy of the teacher's role and other information sources the student has available.

Cline (1972a, 1972b) reported that eleven of seventeen textbooks were written above the reading levels of 50 per cent of the students who used them in a community college. McClellan (1971) found that of

twenty community college textbooks analyzed, eight had readability levels of 16+. Of these eight, three were being used by students in non-academic or remedial-type courses. Four other textbooks had a readability level score of between 13-15 grade levels. The wide range of skills of adult level students requires an understanding and knowledge of the materials used for developing content and concepts in courses.

Spring's results (1975) in no way lighten the indictment against community college texts that Cline's study (1972a, 1972b) and McClellan's results (1971) bring to light.

Profile of College Reading Teacher

Many of the reading and study skills courses have been incorporated into English departments or into newly developed academic skills areas or reading improvement programs. Instructors have come from a variety of disciplines with varied qualifications to teach reading and other study skills.

Brigham (1959) addressed himself to the standards of professional experience and educational background for staff members in a college reading program. He was specific in preferring someone with either a B.A. in English or a B.S. in Education with emphasis in the area of Language Arts or English. On the graduate level, a

minimum of three courses in the psychology of reading with a graduate degree in either education, psychology, or counseling and guidance would be desirable. Teaching experience at two levels and some background in a clinical setting would prepare a staff member well for the rigors of working with college students.

Braam (1963b) reporting on the professional needs of the reading teacher at college adult levels of instruction noted more personal qualities and attributes that he felt would make a good reading teacher. These were as follows: 1) to like children or students; 2) to understand and accept students with all of their strengths and weaknesses and sometimes irritating ways; 3) to enjoy working with people; 4) to be curious; 5) to remain flexible; and 6) to be enthusiastic about teaching reading.

The professional training of a reading teacher should be in line with the recommendations of the Committee on Professional Standards prepared by the International Reading Association. It would involve coursework including theoretical as well as practical laboratory or practicum experiences. A professional reading teacher must possess a sound understanding of the reading process, hopefully, as a result of the training and experience (Braam, 1963b).

In an interesting study by Kroenke (1971) surveying the importance of various aspects of the training procedures of reading specialists already in the field, the specialists ranked the following areas of knowledge or specific skills in which they should be most thoroughly informed in order to operate most effectively: 1) psychology of reading; 2) psycholinguistics: analysis of words; 3) phonics and phonemics; 4) individualized reading procedures; 5) linguistic structure of English; 6) grammar of English language; 7) study-type reading; 8) paragraph organization; 9) programmed procedures; and 10) initial teaching alphabet.

Teaching experiences, laboratory teaching experiences, and inservice training were all considered very important aspects of their repertoire of skills and competencies with which the reading specialists functioned. Those who had the teaching experiences felt more comfortable teaching college level reading than those who had not had such experiences. Kroenke (1971) from the basis of his study raised several questions concerning the importance of course work in literature for children and youth and statistical procedures and methods of educational research because of their ratings at the bottom of the list. He also questioned whether linguistics should be a part of the program for preparing reading specialists.

Schnell (1974) in a survey of community college reading teachers came up with the following profile of the average reading teacher: female (76 per cent), over forty-five years of age (49.6 per cent), teaching both reading classes and laboratory sessions (51 per cent), does not use a workbook (85 per cent), works with 100 or fewer students per semester (63 per cent), and gives individual help if needed (69 per cent). The survey (Schnell, 1974) indicated that on the average, community college reading teachers were highly educated: 99.94 per cent hold masters degrees or higher and 51 per cent have more than twenty-five graduate credits in courses on reading. This training is based largely in clinical-diagnostic settings (49 per cent) and was excellent or adequate in preparing them for the job (81 per cent). The average teacher had been teaching at least eight years (82 per cent).

The most important course work was thought to be in the areas of psychology-counseling, content area reading and study skills, language-psycholinguistics, how to give workshops, and the internship. Schnell (1974) concluded that nearly all the teachers surveyed felt that former experience was more valuable than coursework.

Fry (1964) maintained that the best way to train teachers for a reading improvement course was to give them a reading improvement course. He also recommended

carefully supervised practice teaching.

Otto and Smith (1973) emphasized that the adult reading teachers need to know most of all how to teach reading. This would involve understanding the ultimate goals of reading instruction, being familiar with a wide variety of instructional materials, knowing how to diagnose properly, how to teach word attack skills, how to construct comprehension question. They recommended the same course work and basic training in the fundamentals of teaching reading for all reading teachers in place of the specific methods course for the various levels of reading. The training would emphasize the following points:

1. the skills required for success in reading;
2. the causes for reading problems;
3. diagnostic techniques and procedures; and
4. an introduction to the instructional materials.

Martin (1973) called for more supervised, appropriate field experiences for adult reading teacher training. Maxwell (1973) recognized the wide variety of roles and the breath of knowledge that an adult reading teacher must have to function efficiently and well. Vavoulis and Raygor (1973) in a survey to determine a model curriculum for the training of college and adult reading specialists found that the respondents tended to favor a

pragmatic curriculum that included courses related to the treatment of learning disabilities at college, background courses in the teaching of reading and study skills, and in individualized instruction and educational practices. Interestingly enough, despite the present trend, low priority was given to the areas of counseling, language arts, and special education.

Materials and Techniques of College Reading Programs

Mechanical devices, programmed instruction workbooks, and other special materials and techniques have been used for instructional purposes for many years in college level reading programs. There is no strong empirical evidence indicating that the use of such devices, materials, and/or techniques itself enhances the reading ability of students. These strategies are always mitigated by the instructor. Research findings on all levels of reading ability and the teaching of reading attest to the primacy of the teacher's role in the educational process of young people.

Research results investigating the use of mechanical devices versus not using these devices, special materials, or techniques are emphasizing an aspect of the process, such as, the value of the use or non-use of materials, devices, or techniques, that has very little to do with the actual goals of the

reading process. Thus there are an extraordinary number of spurious effects and unaccounted for variance that make the results very questionable.

Nonetheless, frequently the mechanical devices and techniques utilized in a reading program have an effect on the objectives of the program or are utilized because when used properly they seem to develop skills that are directly in line with the over-all objectives of the course. For example, throughout the 1920's, 1930's, and 1940's, mechanical devices such as the tachistoscope were heavily used for perceptual training in reading courses. The bias of the time period focused on developing fluid eye movements and improving the rate of reading in an attempt to improve one's reading skills. Buswell (1937, 1947), who had a very important influence on college reading programs, considered that improvement in the perceptual aspects of reading was the best way to contribute to efficiency in reading. The use of tachistoscopic devices made common sense if the goals of a reading program were concerned with developing perceptual processes.

There is very little experimental evidence indicating what materials, mechanical devices, or instructional techniques are superior. The common assumption underlying this dearth of research is probably due in part to the concept that different people react differently to

reading process. Thus there are an extraordinary number of spurious effects and unaccounted for variance that make the results very questionable.

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different materials, mechanical devices, or instructional techniques. Another reason is probably due to the difficulty in properly measuring the effects of the materials in relation to other materials etc.

The reports of special techniques that various instructors have employed with considerable success in the teaching of reading at the college level will not be reviewed. The reports are too numerous and, frequently, the success of the special technique is due to the interest and some personality quality of the instructor. A proper evaluation of these reports would be too difficult--the reports themselves are anecdotal and/or do not lend themselves to a rational assessment of their merits. Thus mechanical devices and workbooks will be reviewed.

Mechanical Devices

Mechanical devices have as their primary purpose the improvement of the rate of reading through perceptual training (Geerlofs, 1967). Transfer between perceptual operations and the more general skills for comprehension is assumed to take place. Gilbert (1959) found a lack of transfer of eye-movement training with tachistoscopic devices to reading performance. Interestingly enough, Holmes (1965) found that at the college level only 9 per cent of the variance in speed of reading was accounted for by such perceptual components as span of recognition and fixations.

In a review of twelve investigations measuring non-machine reading courses against machine reading courses, eleven of the twelve groups within the studies which received non-machine training equaled or surpassed the groups receiving machine training in the improvement in the rate of reading (Karlin, 1958).

Various mechanical devices have been reported in conjunction with college reading improvement courses. Geerlofs (1967), Leedy (1958), and Andrews (1956) noted the use of tachistoscopic devices, directional attack control instruments, and accelerators in college reading programs. According to the Geerlofs study (1967) there were no mechanical devices used alone in the courses. They were mostly utilized in a reading program which used many devices.

Gilmore (1959) found the three major types of mechanical devices used in speed reading training to be the tachistoscope, reading pacers, and reading films, but his article limited itself to a discussion of the tachistoscope. He underscored four major assumptions for using a tachistoscope in a reading course: to lengthen the span of recognition; to shorten the fixation time; to instill the concept of reading by phrases; and to provide the inherent motivation peculiar to mechanical devices. Gilmore was quick to point out the disadvantages as well: there is no opportunity to read

continuous text so the reading is unnatural; there is very little commercially available material; and it is difficult to use for group instruction. He quoted a review of the use of the tachistoscope as a reading device by Sommerfeld:

> The principal conclusion to be drawn from this survey of research is that no significant relationship has been found between measures of tachistoscopic span and the measures of reading ability employed. It follows by implication that quick exposure training, in and of itself, cannot influence the process of reading except as certain secondary factors, such as motivation, are involved. (Gilmore, 1959, p. 56)

Gilmore (1959), nonetheless, concluded that it was quite possible to understand this in light of the fact that the tachistoscope had not been used to the best advantage in the typical college reading program.

Johnson (1959) advocating the use of reading pacers concurred with Gilmore (1959) that the effectiveness of a reading improvement device will vary greatly, depending on the resourcefulness of the person using it. Johnson based his entire argument on the assumption that attitude is almost everything and to improve a poor reader's speed is to improve his attitude (p. 36). He quoted no research to back up his position.

Carroll and Thelberg (1959) were more thorough in their presentation of reading films. They listed seven ways by which reading films were assumed to be able to improve an individual's reading rate: by

decreasing the number of regressions; by reducing the length of fixation; by increasing the span of recognition; by perfecting the return sweep; by prompting more rhythmic saccadic movements; by decreasing subvocalizations; and by increasing motivation. Carroll and Thelberg reviewed the various limitations: the difficulty of individualizing instruction; good readers do not tend to have rhythmic eye-movements; and the films provoke headaches. The justification for the use of the films was purely anecdotal.

Perry (1959) warned against using devices that focused primarily on the mechanics of reading because of the difficulties of transfer. However, he noted the usefulness of some of the mechanical exercises and the motivating aspects of using gadgetry. Brigham (1959) also cautioned against the over-use of machines because of the possible danger of emphasizing the mechanics of reading to the de-emphasis of better thinking skills that are basic to reading and study improvement. Brigham (1959) felt that the development of reading in different kinds of text materials, newspapers, magazines, recreational materials, workbooks, as well as a variety of mechanical devices, and a teacher using various techniques, give a program a range and depth of purpose and applicability to most students.

Courtney (1966) reviewed the rise of instrumentation in reading and concluded that there was general agreement as to the place and effectiveness of instruments in the reading program. However, the various studies reviewed by Courtney and others before him do not indicate that there is any greater improvement in reading skills, speed, or comprehension through the inclusion of mechanical devices in a reading program than is achieved through other techniques. Courtney (1966) outlined the recurring theme of the literature: any kind of controlled reading device improves reading ability but no more than any other method or material; the mechanical devices provide motivation; and it is probably the motivation that accounts for the reading improvement.

Still, newer instrumentation has become more available. The use of computers, television, tape recorders are being used more in the teaching of reading at all levels of instruction (Kahn, 1976). Even the most ardent admirers of teaching hardware usually concede that it will not likely result in complete automation of reading instruction. There is reason to hope that this new technology will enhance the teacher's efficiency and, thereby, improve the instructional process.

Workbooks

Publishers are offering more and more materials for use at college level reading courses. Presently there are more than one hundred reading workbooks available for the teaching of reading in college level reading programs (Ahrendt, 1975). The majority of college reading programs make use of workbooks either alone or in conjunction with other materials (Geerlofs & Kling, 1968, Miller, 1957).

Miller (1957) reported that in an extensive survey of over four hundred colleges, 55 per cent indicated the use of a reading workbook of some kind. Some programs listed a single workbook as basic to their program, while others listed several workbooks. Only fifty-one programs did not list any workbook at all. Miller attributed this to the trend towards greater individualization of instruction in reading programs.

Miller (1957) identified certain criteria which should be considered in the selection of a workbook for a reading course. He emphasized that workbooks should be evaluated in light of his criteria and the objectives of the course in which they would be used. Criteria included the following: type of binding, i.e., paper or cloth; length and portion devoted to exercises; type of organization, i.e., amount of exercises, degree of theory, types of exercises, length of book. He

classified the various exercises according to their objectives: eye-span exercises; number and letter recognition exercises; work meaning and vocabulary exercises; phrase and sentence meaning exercises; skimming or idea reading exercises; exploratory or continuous reading exercises; study or thinking exercises; and critical or analytical reading exercises. Also included was data on special features of the workbook such as removable answer sheets, standardized patterns for tests and scoring, established and identified levels of reading difficulty, provision of an instructors manual, provision of scoring keys, provision of time-rate conversion tables, and provision of charts as visual aids to motivation. Also data on the extent of use of various workbooks from a survey of 430 colleges was provided.

Bliesmer (1957) made an annotated listing of materials for the more retarded college reader. Bliesmer included normal bibliographic information with a brief review of the skills covered in the exercises and the difficulty level and price of the material. He reviewed a total of fourteen workbooks. There were well over eighteen skills mentioned that the different books cover from word attack skills to higher level thinking and interpreting skills, which should provide a degree of flexibility for an instructor in selecting a book for whatever objective.

Ironside (1962) made a critical analysis of workbooks published within the ten year span of 1951-1961. Of twenty workbooks reviewed only eleven focused on aspects of word recognition or perceptual training. Both the method of developing these skills and the rationale or theory behind the method were widely different in the eleven books. Apparently, the broadening of the objectives of college reading programs in the 1940's and 1950's to include comprehension skills had been at the expense of the more basic word recognition and perceptual skills.

Ironside (1962) expressed concern with the problem of transfer in the training of word recognition and perceptual skills to the reading process. There were no exercises teaching transfer to real reading materials. The student had to make the leap himself or have a perceptive teacher who could guide him over the hurdle. To help overcome this, Ironside recommended doing word recognition exercises within the context of meaningful material.

This concern was shared by Berg (1959), who stated that one of the primary purposes of the reading improvement programs was to present a series of reading skills in a more or less coordinated fashion. For a skills program to be effective, the activity must be both meaningful and purposeful with some kind of

understanding as to how an exercise helps to produce certain desired results. Berg termed understanding a basis for transfer.

> Not only should the transfer value of a particular exercise be understood, but exercises should be presented in such a manner from each to the next is seen [sic] as cumulative toward the purpose of the activity. (Berg, 1959, p. 116)

The selection of materials should include a wide variety of exercises that illustrate and give practice to each particular skill.

Donna Paterson of Rutgers University in an investigation recently finished examined college reading workbooks as to their readability, the scope and sequence of their reading skills, and their topical interests. She found that workbooks tended to be either theoretically or practically oriented, not both.

Programmed learning materials have been a fairly recent development in reading materials at the college level. They have been an important development in the individualizing of programs and have an extensive theoretical background based primarily on laboratory procedures used to shape the behavior of pigeons (Kahn, 1976). Programmed instructional materials are not dependent necessarily upon use with mechanical devices (Kopel, 1965), even though the stimulus-response paradigm of most workbooks is the basic paradigm of most important programs (Kahn, 1976). The main characteristic of these

materials is their organization pattern of short, sequential, self-correcting units.

The programmed reading workbooks focus primarily on vocabulary development (Fry, 1964), prefixes and roots (Brown, 1964), and the other basic reading skills. The instructional paradigm of these materials are fairly limited in application. They are not independent systems of instruction and should function mainly as drill-and-practice systems to reinforce association and concepts previously taught in classroom interaction (Kahn, 1976).

The scarcity of commercial self-instructional programs in the 1950's and 1960's (Rankin & Smith, 1961) has given way to many more programmed workbooks and teaching machines for college students and adults in the 1970's.

There is a surprising lack of textbooks for college level reading courses. The materials used in most college reading programs are a conglomeration of workbooks, mechanical devices, and content course textbooks. There is little empiricial evidence indicating the superiority of mechanical devices over other techniques or methods of instruction in the teaching of reading. Yet, there is general agreement as to the place and motivating impact that the machines have in a reading program at the college level. There is a disparity in the literature on the actual use of workbooks. Miller (1957) reported in a survey of 400 colleges that 88 per cent indicated that a workbook was used in the reading

or study skills program while Schnell (1974) in a survey of community college reading teachers found that 85 per cent indicated that they did not use a workbook in the reading courses that they taught. This discrepancy may be due to the different targets of the two surveys--colleges and community colleges; an indication of a trend away from the use of workbooks in the 1970's; the emphasis of Schnell's survey was on individual reading teachers, not on the entire program. Nonetheless, there were a wide variety of different workbooks in use with varying skill exercises. Ths selection of a workbook for a course should involve the consideration of some objective criteria. Various criteria were suggested in this review.

Survey of College Developmental Reading Programs

In interpreting the data from surveys, it is imperative to put them in the perspective of the trends of the historical context in which they were completed. In the 1950's, professional groups concerned with reading in the upper levels were formed, most notably the National Reading Conference. Surveys during the period showed a gradual growth in special reading programs (Hill, 1971). The most common upper level reading program was the remedial reading class or program: college teachers still felt that developmental reading instruction was a subject for the high school while high school teachers

relegated the subject to the elementary level. More and more reading rate improvement courses and reading-study skills centers integrated their functions during the late 1940's and early 1950's. Also, the developmental reading skills classes were beginning to appear with increasing frequency (Hill, 1971).

Hill reported that under close scrutiny in the secondary school the classification of the various program types, such as developmental, remedial, rate-study skills, did not always indicate distinct programs. In fact, developmental classes, remedial programs, and rate-study skills centers tended "to overlap considerably in curricula, objectives, materials, and methods employed. . . . There appears to be greater variation in program names than in program content and operation" (Hill, 1971, pp. 24, 26). Hill emphasized that too frequently "the availability of instructional materials tends to shape if not dictate program curricula and instructional procedures regardless of the name or objectives of the program" (p. 26).

Thus, there are severe limitations on the information that is derived from a survey. It must be assumed that the stated objectives of a program are the goals that one pursued within that particular program. Similar objectives among various programs does not necessarily indicate similar instructional methodology or similar

materials. Other limitations include the dubious accuracy of measurement devices (McDonald, 1971, 1965, 1960, 1958, Kingston, 1965) and the difficulty of isolating cause and effect variables without undue contamination in the interpretation of the data. Thus surveys more than anything else tend to indicate trends and overall developments in the teaching of reading. They should not be used to prove the efficacy of one particular method, material, or test.

Causey (1956) completed a comprehensive survey to determine the development of reading programs in colleges and universities in the United States. Of five hundred and seventy-five colleges replying to the questionnaire, four hundred and eighteen reported reading improvement programs in progress as compared with two hundred sixty-eight a year earlier. Enrollment in courses was reported as 57,052 students as compared with 33,431 a year earlier. Causey's survey determined the titles of courses (Reading Improvement, Developmental Reading, English, Reading Laboratory), the departments responsible for instruction (English, Education, Psychology, Reading Clinic, Communications, Humanities), the length of the courses (more than 18 weeks, 18 weeks, 15 weeks, 12 weeks, 10 weeks, 9 weeks, less than 9 weeks), the amount of credit given (5 hours, 3 hours, 2 hours, 1 hour, no credit), the number of classes per week, and the various

workbooks and instruments used.

Andrews (1956) in one of the very few surveys in the literature reporting solely on junior college reading programs found that his request for information about the techniques used to teach reading was interpreted as being a request for a list of equipment and other materials used. Items of equipment and other materials that were reported were in order of frequency the following: textbook/manual, tachistoscope, accelerator, reading films, and tape recorder. The procedures and types of exercises reported were in order of frequency the following: individual work, frequent timed reading exercises, frequent comprehension tests, lecture/discussion, vocabulary development work, eye-movement exercises, and some others. He concluded from his survey that the typical junior college program

> utilizes some sort of textbook and manual or workbook, which generally are combined, involves some explanation and discussion of the problem of reading improvement, uses frequent timed reading exercises, and utilizes a tachistoscope and reading accelerator. (p. 114)

Woods (1957) reported a survey of college reading improvement programs in institutions offering teacher training in Wisconsin. Over 600 individuals were enrolled in college self-improvement reading programs during the first semester of the 1955-1956 school year. There were approximately fifteen students per class.

The classes were both voluntary and free of charge and lasted about 40 hours in duration. The instructors were recruited from a number of departments among the various institutions. In addition to the speed and comprehension aspects of the reading program, a majority of them included vocabulary and study skills in their curriculum. Tachistoscopes, reading rate controllers, workbooks, and reading films were the most frequently mentioned instructional aids.

Leedy (1958) compiled an extensive survey of ninety-two colleges and universities with the questionnaires completed by the directors of the reading improvement programs. The range of the length of the reading programs was from eight hours to ninety hours with a median of twenty-eight hours. The use of mechanical devices was reported by the majority of directors, especially the tachistoscope and various types of accelerators. A number of those surveyed indicated that they developed many of the materials used in their courses. Eighty-eight of the ninety-two respondents indicated the use of standardized reading tests in the diagnosis and evaluation of their students' performance. The tests most frequently used were the Cooperative English Test: Reading Comprehension, Diagnostic Reading Test, Iowa Silent Reading Test, Nelson Denny Reading Test, SRA Survey, and California Reading Test. Over half

of the programs reported used informal testing procedures. Leedy, putting his survey in a historical perspective, noticed a shift in emphasis from mere speed in reading toward the improvement of comprehension, flexibility in reading, and study-skills and vocabulary training. The concept of reading improvement at the college level was broadening to include a developmental aspect from which all students could benefit.

Colvin (1961) investigated the nature, extent, and trends in reading programs and services for students in the seventy-five accredited colleges and universities of Pennsylvania during the academic year, 1957-1958. He found that the typical reading program was under the aegis of the Guidance and Education Departments and was called either Developmental Reading or Reading Improvement. Classes met one hour weekly for one semester of about fifteen weeks. Standardized reading tests were used in the selection of students even though the course was open to all undergraduates as a non-credit course. The program focused on a skills-drill approach to reading speed, comprehension, vocabulary, and study skills. Standardized testing and informal procedures were used in the diagnosis and evaluation of students. Two or three commercial reading manuals or workbooks were used for practice on speed and comprehension. Less than ten per cent of class time was devoted to machinery. In that

time, the reading accelerator and the tachistoscope predominated. Course evaluations were done generally through standardized reading tests. Colvin found that the greatest weaknesses of most programs were the lack of time and personnel, and the voluntary status of enrollment.

From the data of this survey, Colvin (1962) constructed an hypothetical "ideal" college program. Colvin was careful to detail many different aspects of the program including the staffing, training of personnel, credit-status, objectives, materials, methods, curriculum, and evaluation procedures. Some of his developments are relevant to this survey. They are the following:

1. The director and staff are trained through graduate courses in reading;
2. A basic objective of the program is to improve reading and study skills according to individual needs rather than to promise academic success as a result of the course;
3. Materials include mechanical devices (tachistoscope, film projector, and rate controllers), various graded workbooks, a selected library;
4. The method is student centered. About 10 per cent of class time is devoted to machinery; about 60 per cent of class time is devoted

to practice on selected materials and exercises; approximately 25 per cent is given to the establishment of goals, and this leaves about 5 per cent to summarize, record results, and to plan;

5. Comprehension, speed flexibility, vocabulary, and study skills are the major areas of reading receiving attention;
6. Evaluation of a student's progress is a continual process and can be seen over-all through pre-course and post-course reading tests; and
7. There are five class hours a week with credit and normal charges.

Lowe (1962, 1963) made a survey which had as one of its purposes the determination of the number of colleges and universities of the state of Virginia offering reading improvement programs. Twenty-eight institutions reported that they offered such programs with a considerable variety of workbooks, machines, tests, and other materials being used. Lowe (1963) found that the question most of the respondents of the questionnaire wanted answered dealt with what method, material, machine, or test to use in a college reading program and how high a reading rate one could attain.

Thurston (1965) conducted a survey in Louisiana and Mississippi of predominately white, both state and private institutions of higher learning. He found no consistency in any phase of the college reading programs. He noticed a tendency for programs directed by reading personnel to use a variety of methods and materials while those without backgrounds in reading used less flexible methods and more "packaged programs."

Geerlofs (1967) developed a questionnaire in order to determine the relationships between the objectives and practices in college and adult reading programs throughout the nation and recommendations found in the literature. The survey included ranking the objectives of the course, specifying the selection procedure of the students, indicating the use of test, length of programs, the use of class time, the class size, the materials and mechanical devices used, the cost of the course, and the homework requirement. Geerlofs concluded that there was a gap between theory and practice in teaching reading at the college level, but that in a comparison with less recent surveys there were some encouraging signs. There seemed to have been a shifting of emphasis from perceptual training and dependence on machines to the development of comprehension and the use of books.

In a unique study, Seibel (1966) conducted an extensive survey of testing practices and problems of

junior colleges in the United States. He concluded that standardized tests are widely and extensively used in both public and independent junior colleges. Some of the problems of the test procedures at the time of the study were the lack of appropriate norms, difficulty in locating or selecting appropriate tests, and inadequate use of test information because of a lack of training and/or understanding of what the results meant. There was a felt need by the junior college staff surveyed for additional kinds of tests to meet some of the evaluation needs.

Sweiger (1971) conducted a survey of reading programs of junior and community colleges throughout the country. She found that the Nelson Denny Reading Test and The Diagnostic Reading Test were used by approximately 70 per cent of the respondents. She found that of the twenty most popular textbooks used in reading courses, only five concentrated on reading in the content areas and two included exercises that presented subject matter from college disciplines in a way that students would find when enrolled in the actual courses.

Fairbanks and Snozek (1973) found in their survey that 32 per cent of the students participating in college reading programs entered voluntarily. Forty per cent of the two year and 28 per cent of the four year colleges considered individualization of instruction

to be the strongest aspect of their reading programs. Individual counseling and conferences between students and reading program staff were included in the program of 87 per cent of the schools surveyed.

Comments on Community College Reading Programs

Goodwin (1971) reported that more than half of the junior colleges in his national survey require that only students who are labeled as low achievers should take corrective courses in reading improvement.

Evan and Dubois (1972) indicated that even with such widespread implementation of reading programs at the junior college level very few of the programs were being evaluated. They quoted statistics that estimated up to 75 per cent of the low achievers admitted to junior/community colleges withdraw during their first year. They suggested that

> the paucity of evidence and the persistently high drop-out rate among those students enrolled in remedial courses casts considerable doubt on the effectiveness of a majority of the remedial programs now in effect. (p. 40)

A major factor in the success of any program is accurate diagnosis of the students for whom the course is intended. However, Goodwin (1971) found that over 50 per cent of the junior college remedial reading teachers surveyed used the standardized reading test given at the beginning of the course as a basis for their diagnosis.

This lack of emphasis on diagnostic procedures has led to a lack of differentiation between developmental and remedial reading courses at the junior college level (Evans & Dubois, 1972). Individualization of instruction is difficult without a clearly defined starting point and target area. Thus many courses in junior college reading programs have a preselected group of skills to be learned and materials that purport to teach those skills. The areas generally include comprehension, reading rate, and study skills.

Evans and Dubois (1972) indicated that multilevel materials were the common basis for the courses.

> The usual procedure is to assign each student a starting level based on his survey test score . . . and [he] proceeds through presented skill sequences. (p. 40)

Evans and Dubois (1972) called for a more rigorous, more responsible diagnostic procedure and guidance and counseling services for evaluating the various types of low ability students in order to be able to select only those appropriate for the available programs. They differentiated between students with low mental ability and those who have a measurable gap between demonstrated ability and estimated potential. They advocated instruction which is aimed at particular weaknesses, not at grade levels and skills sequences. One of the primary differences between college and community college reading

programs is that college programs are able to focus more on developmental aspects of the reading process while junior colleges must concentrate their energies on remediating deficiencies in the reading process.

Community and junior college programs are based on limited empirical research of the current practices and their effectiveness in helping the low achiever. It is a heavy responsibility to be expected to meet the needs and solve the problems of all low ability, high-risk students. Many programs have been established with this goal in mind. Evans and Dubois (1972) suggested that this is an unfair task and the programs must begin differentiating between students who are of low mental ability and those who are "underachievers." They recognized that students with low mental ability may not be helped by short term intensive courses in reading or study skills and that these remedial programs should be required of the "underachievers." They did not address themselves to the problem of the students with low measured mental capabilities who are now a large proportion of the students entering community colleges through the open-door policy.

No association or journal speaks directly for community college reading programs. There are no specific bibliographic instruments nor a comprehensive, professional research matrix from which a coherent body

of related research could evolve.

The orientation of the typical junior college reading teacher is pragmatic, not theoretical. He is preferred to be a superior teacher and is seldom rewarded for research output (Kerstiens, 1971).

> Lacking background in research procedure and organized fact finding activities, practitioners tend to produce descriptive, instead of experimental, research, vaguely worded reports, surveys of existing procedures and practices, and reports of programs that are "rarely examined in a professional manner." (Kerstiens, 1971, p. 5)

Most reading studies are not well designed enough to study whatever problem or area is under investigation (Kingston & Weaver, 1967). Consequently, most are statistically inaccurate or inadequate (Ray, 1964). A great many suffer from experimental bias or an over-enthusiastic approach that attempt to prove that a particular technique, approach, or program produces gains (Robinson, 1968).

Braam (1963a) identified four problems in college-adult reading research:

1. extremely restrictive samples;
2. no replication of results;
3. lack of collaborative research; and
4. absence of longitudinal studies.

A large proportion are tangential or not relevant to the teaching situation (Chansky, 1964). Only

about 28 per cent of the research investigations dealt with the reading instruction process per se (Herber & Early, 1969). Most research involved surveys and program descriptions (Eurich, 1965), leaving much of the instructional practice to be based on personal judgment rather than research (Harris, 1968).

Kerstiens (1971) identified three areas badly in need of research for community college reading programs:

1. Tests--Even though the junior college reading program is designed for the remedial student, rudimentary reading skills, such as phonics, pronunciation, word attack, word recognition, spelling, are often taken for granted or ignored by present standardized reading tests for adults (Nelson, 1965). There is need to develop special tests specifically for and normed on community college populations;
2. Materials--There is a dearth of studies on the effectiveness and on the development of special materials for the community college population; and
3. Programs and approaches.

Conclusions

College reading programs should be reviewed from the perspective of the historical trends from which they

developed. There is very little data on community college reading programs per se. This review has focused primarily on college reading programs which often cater to freshmen and sophomores who may be similar to the freshmen and sophomores of the community college.

Criteria for evaluation of the programs and of the individual success of a student are essential. The criteria should be selected in terms of the overall objectives of the course, the needs of the students within the course, and the program's concept of the reading process. Present trends indicate that the goals of college reading programs tend to stress reading versatility and reading comprehension through fairly individualized procedures more than in the past. Counseling and guidance are current aspects of many of the programs.

The diagnostic procedures used in college reading are varied and should be selected in terms of the reading program's goals and objectives. Standardized measures of reading ability are the most frequently utilized. These are best used in conjunction with informal and more individualized diagnostic procedures. There is a need for more refinement in the currently available measuring devices of reading versatility.

The materials and techniques of college reading programs are not founded on empirical evidence attesting to their benefits but rather are a matter of the

available technology that seems to relate to the reading process. Materials are varied. They include all sorts of mechanical devices and a wide variety of workbook materials. There seems to be no question as to their importance and need in the college reading programs even though some of the more eminent researchers and practitioners such as Walter Pauk of Cornell reject their use.

The average college reading teacher is female, over forty-five years of age, does not use a workbook, works with less than 100 students per semester, and is highly educated with more than twenty-five credits in graduate courses on the reading process. Individual attention is given as needed.

The surveys conducted in the past have indicated rather gross trends of the college-adult reading programs. Present indications are that college reading programs are tending to provide fairly extensive counseling services in their attempt to better individualize programs and understand student needs. Overall goal objectives seem to concentrate most heavily on comprehension and higher level critical skills and versatility even though there is very little information about teaching reading in specific content areas in college programs.

College and adult reading programs continue to evolve, notably to meet the needs of academically less well prepared adults who are increasingly seeking higher education. There are gaps between research knowledge and instructional procedures but the fact that the programs are being taught by highly-educated and experienced teachers and that the programs are evolving and using knowledge from research is encouraging.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

This survey involves sending a questionnaire to the twenty-three different community colleges throughout New Jersey. The survey was designed to give us a more complete picture of how the reading programs function in the community colleges of New Jersey.

Sample

Questionnaires were sent to the twenty-three community colleges throughout New Jersey. The name and addresses of the colleges were found in American Junior Colleges, edited by Edmund Gleaser.

Construction of Questionnaire

The first eleven questions were taken from the questionnaire by Geerlofs and Kling (1968). These eleven questions were "designed to elicit answers to two basic questions: what were the program objectives; and what were the methods and materials used to meet these objectives?" (p. 5). The other five questions surveyed the training of the instructors, the departments by which the reading programs are conducted, and the kind of

evaluation procedures used in the course. A copy of the questionnaire and the accompanying letter can be found in Appendices A and B.

Treatment of the Data

The answers to the questions were tabulated and comparisons were made between recommendations from the literature and the findings of the survey related to the following topics:

1. Type of program, i.e., type of student at whom the program was directed;
2. Hierarchical listing of objectives;
3. Tests used to evaluate progress of students;
4. Workbooks and other materials used in the course;
5. Technological mechanisms and mechanical devices utilized;
6. Training and background of instructors; and
7. Evaluation procedures used to improve the course.

Two colleges responded but did not provide any data. One did not offer any such reading courses and the other geared its course directly towards an English composition class.

Summary

A questionnaire was mailed to the twenty-three different community colleges of New Jersey in order to derive data to better understand the functioning of reading programs in these colleges.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A questionnaire was sent to reading instructors in the twenty-three junior/community colleges of New Jersey in order to determine relationships between the objectives and practices of community college reading programs in New Jersey and theoretical developments and recommendations found in the literature. This was accomplished through the following perspective: answers were sought to the following questions through both the survey and the literature search:

1. What are the objectives for reading programs for New Jersey community colleges?
2. What are the most common materials, methods, and technological equipment used to meet the specified objectives?
3. What is the relationship between literature research findings and specified objectives and materials of the survey?
4. What are the qualifications of the instructors? Do they meet the standards recommended in the literature?

5. What evaluation procedures are used to improve the course presentation and contents?

Findings of the Survey

Of the twenty-three questionnaires sent to instructors of reading courses at community colleges, fifteen were returned. This was a 65 per cent response from the New Jersey community college reading instructors representing their programs at the various institutions. Of these fifteen respondents, two did not provide any data: one did not offer any such reading course and the other geared its course directly towards an English composition class and did not answer the questionnaire. The latter institution indicated an interest in setting up a reading course and thus wanted the results of this survey to aid in setting appropriate objectives and selecting materials. Of the thirteen who answered the questionnaire, one respondent indicated that their community college had incorporated their reading course into a more general course that dealt with different content areas. This respondent completed the questions with information about the course that no longer was being held. Nonetheless, the data from the questionnaire was utilized.

The results of the survey will be reported by devoting a separate section to each question on the questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire may be found in Appendix A of this paper.

Question 1: Extent of practice of reading programs and type of program

Fourteen of the fifteen respondents indicated that there was or is a reading/study skills program at their community college. One of the fifteen stated that their entering students were of such high academic caliber that a developmental reading program would be superfluous and unnecessary. They had no developmental reading program. The eight who did not return their questionnaires apparently all offered reading courses to their students as reported to this surveyor through direct communication over the telephone. Of the fourteen who indicated that they had reading/study skills programs, one respondent did not fill out the questionnaire because the course was directly tied into an English composition class and put a strong emphasis on writing skills and very little concern was given to developing reading skills. The remainder of the analysis of this survey will deal with the thirteen of the fifteen respondents who answered the questionnaire.

Twelve of the thirteen instructors indicated that the community college where they taught offered

developmental reading courses for students while the thirteenth used to but no longer offered a separate reading program or course. They had converted their reading course into a college learning laboratory which services all basic course areas.

Three respondents indicated that they offered speed reading courses for business executives as opposed to developmental reading courses for college students. The majority of community colleges in New Jersey did not offer reading courses for business executives.

Question 2: Objectives and goals or reading programs

Each community college ranked the various objectives for their reading programs. Average rankings for the objectives of the reading programs were computed and gave the following results from highest to lowest: comprehension, flexibility in approach to reading situation, vocabulary and word attack skills, rate, and study skills. See Table 2.

Two respondents linked different course objective rankings for different level reading courses. For both respondents the lower level reading courses had comprehension as the primary objective with vocabulary and word attack skills as the second most important goal of the course. For the higher level reading courses, one respondent indicated that flexibility in

TABLE 2

OBJECTIVES OF READING COURSES AS RANKED
BY THE VARIOUS COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Skill	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average Ranking
1. Rate	1	2	2	1	4	1	4
2. Comprehension	6	4	1	1	1	0	2
3. Vocabulary and word attack skills	0	4	5	3	1	1	3.3
4. Flexibility	4	4	2	1	2	0	2.5
5. Study skills	2	0	1	2	6	1	4.1
6. Other	1	0	1	3	0	0	-

approach to reading situations was the primary and only goal while the other respondent who addressed himself to this placed study skills as the most important objective of the higher level reading course and put flexibility in approach to reading situations as the next most important objective.

Only one respondent indicated any emphasis on content area reading skills in their reading program. In this program, content area reading skills was fourth in importance. There was no mention of content area reading skills in the objectives of the other respondents from the various community colleges in New Jersey.

The results may be found tabulated in Table 2.

Question 3: Selection of students for the reading program

In response to the question of how participants are selected for the reading program, all of the respondents indicated that students could be referred by professors or self-referred to the reading program.

For nine of thirteen respondents answering the question, the developmental reading course was a required part of the curriculum for students identified as low achievers with credit given for the course. Four respondents indicated that the course was not required, nor was credit given.

Question 4: Pre- and post-testing procedures

All of the New Jersey community college reading instructors participating in the survey indicated that pre- and post-tests were given to students in the reading program.

Nine of the thirteen responded that they used more than one pre-test and post-test while the other four respondents indicated that they relied on one pre-test and one post-test for their results for diagnosis and evaluation. Only two of the respondents stated that they used in-house testing materials and procedures for pre- and post-testing diagnosis and evaluation.

The tests used were standardized tests for the most part. The most popular tests were in order of frequency of usage as follows: the Nelson-Denny Reading Test and the California Reading Test (grades 9-14) received the highest usage and the Davis Reading Test received the next most. Other reading tests used were: the Test for Adult Basic Education; the Diagnostic Reading Test; the Minnesota Reading Test; the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test Form F; the McGraw-Hill Reading Tests; and the California Achievement Test. One program gave its own tests. Essentially there were as many tests used as there were respondents.

Question 5: Length of program

The responses for most questionnaires were incompletely filled out for the question regarding the length of the program.

Various institutions offered different reading courses according to the needs of the students. At the two community colleges offering low level and high level reading courses, the instructors indicated that the reading courses varied in length and time duration partially as a function of their objectives. The low level courses tended to be longer, 45 and 30 hours respectively, while the high level courses tended to be shorter, 30 and 20 hours respectively. The same tendency could be seen between the developmental reading courses and the speed reading courses: the developmental courses tended to be longer while the speed reading courses tended to be shorter.

The median course length was 37 hours, usually meeting three hours per week. The range was from one to two hours per day; from two to five hours per week; and from six to forty-five hours per course. One course in a particular program was primarily laboratory oriented. There were no restrictions or time limits on how much or how little a student would use the laboratory; also, there was very little supervision in this instance as indicated by the numbers of students enrolled in

that particular course (85+), the number of instructors and assistants (4), and the number of courses (4) within the program. The course was described as being individualized--individualized in that the students in the course worked on their own with practically no supervision. As may be expected, there was no credit given for this course.

Question 6: How time is spent

Twelve of the thirteen respondents completed or partially completed this part of the survey. The median responses to the question of what percentage of time was spent in lecture, reading exercises, machine work, or other activities were the following: lecturing accounted for 23 per cent of course time; reading exercises took approximately 48 per cent; machine work occupied 12 per cent of class time; and other activities utilized 4 per cent, leaving 13 per cent of unaccounted for class time. The 13 per cent may be due, in part, to incomplete reporting and to poor approximations of how class time was spent. The "other activities" which were specified included working on skills in an individualized laboratory situation, reacting to class reports, and study time.

Six respondents reported zero per cent of class time devoted to machine work while only three

respondents indicated that they did not use mechanical devices.

There did appear to be differences in the break down of how time is spent in the classroom between speed reading courses and developmental reading courses. The percentages were approximately the same for the time spent in reading exercises while speed reading courses tended to devote more time to using mechanical devices and less time in lecture than developmental reading courses. Table 3 summarizes the findings of the present study compared with previous surveys.

Question 7: Group size

There was a wide variation reported in minimum and maximum class size as reported by the thirteen community colleges in New Jersey. The minimum average class size was thirteen and the maximum average class size was thirty-two. The maximum average class size was a bit inflated due to a reported laboratory class of 85+ students. Six of the thirteen respondents minimum-maximum class size range fell within the average minimum-maximum class size range. Of the other seven, five had either a minimum or maximum number within the average range.

The smallest class size reported had a total of three students, the largest a total of 85+ students.

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF VARIOUS SURVEYS OF HOW TIME IS SPENT IN A READING COURSE

Activity	Class time (per cent)		
	Kahn 1977 community college	Geerlofs 1966 college	Colvin 1962 college "idea
Lecture	23	13½	25*
Workbook exercise	48	43½	60
Machine activities	12	21	10
Other	4	11	--
Summarizing and recording results	--	--	5
Unaccounted for	13	11	--

*Colvin's category of lecture included setting goals.

Question 8: Orientation of program

Twelve of the thirteen respondents answered this question. None indicated that the course was machine-oriented; six reported that their course was book-oriented; four favored the eclectic orientation; one called itself lecture oriented; and one indicated that it was individualized and oriented to the individual needs of each student.

Interestingly, five of the six book oriented courses listed comprehension as their primary goal for their reading course; three of the four eclectically oriented classes and the one individualized class reported flexibility in approach to reading as their primary goal.

Question 9: Materials used

Twelve of the thirteen respondents indicated that a workbook(s) with timed exercises were used in their courses. Nine of the thirteen indicated that mechanical devices were used in their courses: three reported that they did not use mechanical devices while one did not answer the question. One respondent explained that neither workbooks with timed exercises nor that mechanical devices were used but that the reading course was a specialized three week program developed by Achieving Greater Potential, Inc., which included

specialized materials from the program.

Most respondents only gave a sampling of the workbooks used in their courses. The majority of respondents reported the use of a large number of workbooks, teacher-made materials, mechanical devices, and individualized procedures. Ten different workbooks were reported--no respondents reported using the same workbook. A complete listing of the workbooks used may be found in Appendix C.

Of the mechanical devices used, the controlled reader and tachistoscope were the most popular, usually used within the context of the same course. Also mentioned were reading films, teacher-made audio-visual aids, and specialized devices from AGP, Inc.

Question 10: Fees

All thirteen respondents reported that a fee was charged for the course. Regular tuition charges were assessed at three community colleges while prices ranged from $34 per 45 hour course to $60 per 45 hour course at seven other community colleges. One community college charged $54 for a three week 6 hour reading course. Another assessed a $50 charge for a 30 hour developmental reading course.

The average charge per hour of reading instruction was about $1. The range spanned $.75 per hour to

$9 per hour. The reading course which assessed a charge of $9 per instructional hour or $54 for a three week 6 hour course has since merged into a more general laboratory course dealing with all content areas.

Question 11: Homework

Eleven respondents reported assigning regular quantities of homework--two did not give homework assignments. Interestingly, the two respondents who do not assign homework do not require the reading program of their students or give credit for participation in the reading program.

The median expected time for the homework to require was 3½ hours per week. There was considerable variation ranging from 1 hour per week to 7 hours per week.

Question 12: Department responsible for reading program

Five respondents indicated that the reading improvement courses at their community colleges were under the guidance of the English department; four, of the Reading department; two, of the Humanities department; one, of the Education department, of the Developmental Studies department, of the Academic Skills department, and of the Collegiate Foundations department. One respondent reported that one reading course was offered in the English department and

another reading course in the Academic Skills department. There was no explanation given as to possible differences between the two courses.

Question 13: Number of instructors

The number of instructors and their qualifications varied considerably from institution to institution surveyed. There was a median of three instructors per community college. The range was from 1 to 10 per college. There was no data given about the course load of each instructor. The number seems rather high probably due to the reporting of teaching assistants and part-time staff without differentiating between them on the survey.

Question 14: Background of instructor

The backgrounds of the various teachers spanned a number of academic disciplines and academic degrees but was restricted to the field of education. There was one instructor with an Ed.D., thirteen with M.Ed.'s, five with B.A.'s in education, and ten with at least B.A.'s in education.

The instructor who had achieved an Ed.D. received his training in Reading and Educational Psychology. He ran his department with three full-time student teaching assistants.

Of the thirteen with M.Ed. degrees, six were trained in Reading, two in English, two in Special Education, and three in related educational disciplines. Of the five with B.A. degrees in Education, three received their degrees in English, one in Special Education, and one in a related educational discipline.

Of the instructors who reported their educational backgrounds those who were trained in Reading, English, and Special Education, respectively, were the most common in the community colleges surveyed.

Question 15: Drop-out rate

The median estimated drop-out rate was 13 per cent. It ranged from an estimated low of 2 per cent to a high of 25 per cent. All four respondents who indicated that the reading courses were not required for their students, that is, the students attended voluntarily through the referral of a professor or self-referral, had a drop-out rate of no higher than 10 per cent with a median of 6 per cent and a low of 2 per cent. The nine respondents who reported that the course was required for certain students not meeting specific requirements had a drop-out rate of no higher than 25 per cent with a median of 17 per cent and a low of 5 per cent.

Question 16: Course evaluation

Seven of the thirteen respondents indicated that a formal evaluation procedure of the course by the students, by the instructor(s), and by others, most notably, college administrators, regularly took place. Three of the thirteen had evaluations by both students and instructors, while three others reported that there were no evaluation procedure for the courses at their community colleges.

Summary of Findings of Survey

There are developmental reading programs in nearly all of the community colleges in New Jersey. Only one of the twenty-three institutions surveyed in New Jersey did not offer any reading program to their students. Detailed responses to the questionnaire were given by fifteen of the twenty-three community colleges. The other eight answered various questions over the telephone. The type of course and the background of the instructor varied considerably in the various institutions.

The most typical reading course in the surveyed community colleges of New Jersey would focus on comprehension as the primary goal of the course with flexibility in approach to reading situations and vocabulary and work attack skills, respectively, as

secondary and tertiary goals. The developmental reading course would be a required part of the curriculum with credit being given for the course. Standardized pre- and post-tests would be given, either the Nelson-Denny Reading Test or the California Reading Test, in order to diagnose the needs of the students upon entrance to the course and to evaluate the progress of the student after having received the course. Three class hours with a possible extra one hour laboratory and about 3½ hours of homework a week for about fifteen weeks of 45 hours would be the duration of this course. Twenty-three per cent of the class time would be spent in lecture; 48 per cent in reading exercises; 12 per cent in machine-oriented activities; 4 per cent in other activities; and 13 per cent is unaccounted for. The average group size would range from thirteen to thirty-two with an instructor with a Reading or English educational background.

Beyond a nucleus of techniques, the instructors would tend to run a book-oriented class, using a variety of workbooks and possibly the textbooks of other courses. The controlled reader and the tachistoscope would be utilized during the course. The course would be run by either the Reading or English Departments and have a rather low drop-out rate of 13 per cent. The evaluation procedure of the course would involve the

students, instructors, and, most probably, the college administrators.

Courses tended not to be individualized even though a large portion of the work was done fairly independently. The developmental reading courses tended to be longer than the speed reading courses, and the low level reading courses tended to be longer than the high level reading courses.

Discussion

There was considerable variation in the developmental reading courses offered at the various community colleges surveyed in New Jersey. Nonetheless, the variation seemed to be more superficial than substantial in character.

In this section, a comparison will be made between current practices in reading programs of the New Jersey community colleges as indicated in the survey results and the recommended practices found in the literature. A review of the literature indicated that there were no definite procedures or objectives for community college programs that have been tested and evaluated through research. In fact, there was very little literature or research specific to community college reading programs. For this reason, some of the comparisons will be made to the body of literature

comprising college and adult reading even though there may exist distinct differences between community college reading programs and college and adult reading programs. This should be kept in mind when reviewing this section. Also, because of the considerable variation in the surveyed practices and the vast differences found in the literature, the writer had to interpret and evaluate some of the reported facts and opinions in the discussion. Thus this discussion will not be completely factual but rather will include many of the biases of the writer.

The areas covered in the following discussion will not be a question by question analysis of the survey. Some of the questions will be included together into one section if they seem to fit together while other questions may not be discussed if there is very little in the literature to compare with.

Program, Objectives, and Diagnostic Procedure

This section deals with questions 1, 2, and 4. A junior/ community college reading program is inclined to have the remedial student, the person with deficiencies in basic reading skills, such as, phonics, word attack, word recognition, spelling, and other rudimentary skills (Kerstiens, 1971) in its population of students. The average community college student scores at the thirtieth percentile on a national standardized test (The Two Year College and Its

Students, 1969). Community colleges consistently report that their average student falls well below national norms on standardized reading comprehension and vocabulary tests (O'Banion, 1969).

There was no differentiation on the survey among developmental reading courses, remedial reading courses, or speed reading courses. The question was phrased, "Do you offer developmental reading courses for: A. College students; B. Business executives?" Three respondents indicated that they offered speed reading courses for business executives, but there were no respondents who differentiated between remedial courses and developmental reading courses for college students.

This may have been due to a number of factors. The concept of what a developmental reading course is may have included remediation of basic needs. An examination of the objectives of the reading programs does not indicate this. The higher level skills of comprehension and flexibility in approach to reading situations predominate as the focal points or primary goals of the majority of community colleges surveyed. Vocabulary and work attack skills were unfortunately grouped together on the questionnaire. It is unfortunate because vocabulary development and word attack skills receive very different emphasis.

Vocabulary development can be more specialized to specific content areas and is more part of a developmental reading program while word attack skills are the rudimentary skills that frequently comprise the core of remedial reading programs. However, they were not ranked as a primary goal for any of the courses surveyed.

One of the most apparent and accepted trends in reading research and practice for college and adult reading as reported in the literature has been a broadening of the concept of reading from a mechanistic interpretation of eye movements to placing greater emphasis on individual variation, the higher level reading skills, and especially content area reading. This broadening has pervaded the entire field of college and adult reading. It seems also to have enveloped the more recent field of community college reading (Darnes et al., 1971) even though the academic proficiency of the student population of community college is very different from students in colleges and universities (O'Banion, 1969).

According to the review of college reading in Chapter II of this paper, the tendency is for reading programs' objectives to emphasize reading comprehension, flexibility, and content area reading. The results of the survey of New Jersey community colleges tends to

reflect this trend: program objectives focus on comprehension and flexibility in approach to reading situations. However, this tendency reflects a very real dilemma: there seems to be a gap between the remedial needs of the typical community college student and the reported program objectives of the New Jersey community colleges surveyed. The program objectives of the community colleges seem appropriate in terms of the literature on college reading. However, on closer examination, despite the broadening of the concept of reading, many researchers and practitioners emphasize the need to individualize the course objectives to meet the needs of the students (Maxwell, 1963, 1972, Brethower, 1968, and many others). This, in turn, requires appropriate diagnostic procedures (Evans & Dubois, 1972) in order to be able to differentiate between the types of students who will be taking the reading course. However, from the questionnaire, it appeared that the focus of most of the courses is generally upon a pre-selected group of skills and materials, usually general comprehension, that proceed through a prescribed skill sequence. This kind of developmental approach, when remediation is required, does not necessarily ameliorate the cause(s) for that level of performance. Evans and Dubois (1972) argued that direct instruction to correct inadequate or incorrect learnings

is an essential aspect of the remedial teaching process required with junior/community college students. They emphasize that "instruction must be directed toward those specific disabilities which caused a particular grade level performance," (p. 42) not towards the mastery of prerequisite skills for assigned levels.

Thus on a superficial level there seems to be agreement between the goals of the community college reading programs surveyed and the recommendations from the literature, but on closer scrutiny there is little in the way of agreement. The literature suggests the importance of appropriate diagnosis to meet individual needs, especially for the student population in junior/community colleges who tend to require more remedial attention. Fairbanks and Snozek (1973) found that 40 per cent of the two-year colleges considered individualization to be the strongest aspect of their program. In this survey, none of the institutions indicated that they ran individualized programs. One respondent reported that one of the goals of the reading course at the community college where he taught was to overcome common problems.

The diagnostic procedures reported by the respondents are a good indication of the lack of individualization in their reading courses. Only one respondent reported using in-house tests along with

standardized tests in their pre- and post-testing procedures. All of the other respondents reported giving standardized reading tests which are not diagnostic tests but rather survey reading tests. The tests used do not provide information about why a student reads poorly or what his deficiencies are (without a detailed item analysis); rather they give grade levels or percentile scores. "This is a most important consideration if a remediation program is to be successfully planned" (Evans & Dubois, 1972, p. 42). In a survey, Goodwin (1971) found the same disregard of appropriate diagnostic efforts: 60 per cent of the 300 junior college reading teachers surveyed considered the standardized reading test given at the beginning of the course as diagnostic.

In conclusion, it appears that the goals and objectives of the community college reading programs of New Jersey need to be reevaluated in terms of the individual students in the courses. This can only be done through appropriate diagnostic procedures, which requires more than the administration of standardized survey reading tests at the beginning of each course. It also should involve some of the myriad of procedures outlined in the literature review of this paper.

Recommendations for improving the questions 1, 2, and 4 of this questionnaire would include the following in order to receive more detailed data:

1. Asking the respondents of the institutions if remedial, developmental, and/or speed reading courses were offered;

2. Separating vocabulary and work attack skills into two separate categories in the list of objectives in question 2 and including overcoming individual deficiencies as another objective;

3. Asking what is the entire diagnostic procedure used for each individual student;

4. Perhaps a detailed interview on all of the above would give a more detailed picture.

Some of the other questions pertaining to this section which need more research and were raised by this study are the following:

1. Should objectives of community college reading programs concentrate on basic remedial needs, on skills needed in specific content areas, or on flexibility in approach to reading situations? Should there be different courses with different objectives?

2. Are there any appropriate diagnostic instruments developed specifically for the community college population?

Referral Process and Drop-Out Rate

This section deals with questions 3 and 15. Literature reports give contradictory assessments of

the situation. A number of researchers and practitioners maintain that the weakest aspect of their reading program has to do with it being voluntary and receiving no college credit for taking the course while others emphasize that the voluntary aspect of their programs means that the students who enter tend to have higher motivation and remain longer in the course. In deciding whether or not the reading courses are voluntary and are assigned credit, some consideration should be given to the objectives of the institution, the goals of the reading program and the course itself, and the attitudes of the faculty and student body.

In this survey nine of the thirteen respondents reported that the developmental reading course was required for low achievers and credit was given for the course. This is a much higher percentage of institutions which require a reading program of low achievers than found in other surveys (Geerlofs & Kling, 1968, Fairbanks & Snozek, 1973) and may be explained by the fact that this has been the only survey reporting this data solely about community colleges.

Interestingly enough, all four respondents who indicated that the reading courses were entirely volutnary had a lower median drop-out rate (6 per cent) than the nine respondents who reported that the course was required for certain students and could be elected

by the other student population (17 per cent). This tends to support the contention that a voluntary reading program tends to have more motivated students than a required reading program as determined by the drop-out rate. However, the average reported drop-out rate for both types of reading courses is surprisingly low. It may be worth providing academic supports for more less motivated students than for less more motivated students.

Evans and Dubois (1972) report that there are no hard facts about the drop-out rate in reading/study skills courses at the junior/community college level but the drop-out estimates range from 74 per cent to 95 per cent from what they consider to be reputable sources. The drop-out rate compiled by this survey is considerably lower (a median of 13 per cent) than those estimates.

In conclusion, the type of referral process should depend theoretically on the nature of the institution where the program is being offered. The drop-out rate seems to be affected by the type of referral process. It makes good sense that at a community college the reading program is a required part of the curriculum for students who demonstrate low abilities to read as measured by standardized testing procedures.

Tests

This section deals with question 4. There are no adequate standardized tests available specifically for the community college population (Kerstiens, 1971, Seibel, 1966). It is one of the areas of testing that has been most neglected (Seibel, 1966). The community college serves a heterogeneous reading population and should have tests which measure a wider range of reading skills than are now available (Kurak, 1967). The average community college student consistently scores well below national norms on standardized reading comprehension and vocabulary tests (O'Banion, 1969).

Of the nine tests mentioned by the respondents of the survey, two appear to be superior to the others for college level reading measurement as reported in the Mental Measurement Yearbook (1965). Of these two the Nelson-Denny Reading Test was mentioned by the greatest number of respondents (3). The other was the Davis Reading Test which was used by one respondent. The other tests showed greater weaknesses in reliability data, had little proof of validity, had no college level norms, poor interpretive data, and/or the test might be too easy for most college students (Buros, 1965).

In conclusion, there are no appropriate reading tests for community college populations. Of tests used by respondents, the Nelson-Denny Reading Test and the

Davis Reading Test were the best available for college level reading. The majority of respondents were using tests which were not as accurate for college level reading as others on the market.

Course Emphasis

This section deals with questions 6, 8, and 9. Seven of the thirteen respondents considered their courses to be book-oriented as opposed to machine-oriented or other oriented. Twelve of the thirteen indicated use of at least one workbook in their courses. Most respondents only gave a sampling of the workbooks used in their courses, some indicated that a large number was used. A result consistent with these findings of the survey was that an average of 48 per cent of course time was spent doing reading exercises, presumably in workbooks.

Very few literature reviews addressed themselves specifically to this area. Colvin (1962) recommended in his ideal college reading program that about 60 per cent of class time be devoted to practice on selected exercises and textbook materials. Colvin and others pointed to a need to use content area textbooks in the reading course, a practice utilized in only one of the community colleges surveyed.

Comparing the results from the question of how class time is spent of this survey with that of Geerlofs' college survey (1966) and Colvin's ideal college reading program (1962) is interesting. See Table 3.

In Kahn's survey more class time is devoted to lecture (23 per cent) than in Geerlofs' (13½ per cent) while less time is spent in activities with machines (12 to 21 per cent). In Kahn's survey the results seem to indicate less machine usage but more lecture time. Both the time spent on mechanical devices and on reading exercises is fairly consistent for Kahn's results and Colvin's ideal even though the reading exercises in Kahn's survey focused in workbooks while Colvin recommended using content area textbooks. The greatest departure can be seen in the 23 per cent of class time devoted to lectures in the New Jersey community colleges surveyed by Kahn while Colvin felt that 25 per cent of class time should be spent establishing individual goals and discussing common problems. This is due to Colvin's conception of the ideal college reading program as being individualized. However, the community colleges surveyed by Kahn, while paying lipservice to individualization, did not utilize adequate diagnostic procedures in order to be able to identify the individual needs of their students, spent the greatest protion of their

class time on workbook exercises which, the writer presumes, were done as a class because of the described circumstances, and concentrated on comprehension and reading flexibility skills when it may have been more appropriate to work on the more basic word attack skills.

In conclusion, the thirteen community colleges who responded to this survey tended to have book-oriented reading programs which were not very individualized. Materials seemed to focus mainly on workbooks despite literature recommendations to use content area textbooks. The vast majority of time was spent doing workbook exercises (48 per cent) and listening to lecture (23 per cent) despite literature recommendations to individualize goals and programs.

Educational Background and Department Responsible for Reading Program

This sections deals with questions 12 and 14. One of the literature reports which addresses itself to the educational background of college instructors in more than a perfunctory manner is by Lowe (1963). He noted that instructors with a reading background or a thorough knowledge of the reading process tended to be more flexible in their approach to teaching reading than instructors who did not have this background.

In this survey, eleven of twenty-nine instructors had specialized in reading at either the Bachelor or Master's level. Eighteen of the twenty-nine had either educational backgrounds in Reading or English. Interestingly, this may have been a result of the department which was responsible for having the reading programs. Eleven of the fifteen departments were either English (5) or Reading (4) or Humanities (2). The results of the survey tend to indicate that most reading instructors have English or Reading academic backgrounds. The results have been tabulated in Table 4.

In conclusion, the educational backgrounds of the majority of reading instructors at the surveyed community colleges is either English or Reading. The literature recommends that instructors have a working knowledge of the reading process in order for them to be more flexible in their teaching. The predominance of reading/study skills programs under the guise of Reading and English departments tends to indicate that the instructors have this working knowledge of the reading process. However, there are a number of reading instructors in community colleges of New Jersey who have educational backgrounds in other fields of expertise than reading and may have to depend solely on their experience and intuition in order to develop

TABLE 4

BACKGROUND OF READING INSTRUCTOR AND DEPARTMENT OF READING PROGRAM

Subject	Department Housed	No degree Specified	B.A.	M.Ed.	Ed.D.
English	5	2	3	2	-
Reading	4	5	-	6	-
Special Education	-	1	1	2	-
Educational Psychology	-	-	-	-	1
Political Science	-	1	1	-	-
Social Studies	-	1	-	-	-
Adult Education	-	-	-	1	-
Math/Science & Reading	-	-	-	1	-
Elementary Education	-	1	-	-	-
Humanities	2	-	-	-	-
Collegiate Foundations	1	-	-	-	-
Education	1	-	-	-	-
Developmental Studies	1	-	-	-	-
Academic Skills	1	-	-	-	-

and organize a reading program.

Evaluation of Course

This section focuses on question 16. The evaluation of a course and program is essential for good teaching. The more levels of evaluation that take place the more avenues for improvement that open theoretically. It should be an assumed part of every reading course and program at every level of teaching.

Over half of the respondents indicated that there were course evaluations by students, instructors, and college administrators while three reported that there were no evaluation procedures used in their courses. Of the three instructors who reported this lack, two did not receive their academic training in either Reading or English while the third respondent did not specify his educational background.

In conclusion, the majority of New Jersey community college respondents utilize proper evaluation procedures but there are some who need to begin evaluating their reading programs.

Course Characteristics

The findings of questions 5, 7, 10, 11, and 13 were reported. They are not the type of questions that can be compared to recommendations from the literature because they are specific to the nature

of each community college, the faculty and students, the objectives of the program, and other such considerations.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The concept of college reading instruction has been gradually shifting from a perspective that emphasized remediation of skills that were deficient to a perspective that emphasizes the need for developmental reading programs in order for the continued growth of one's reading ability throughout college and adult life. Objectives of reading programs have switched from highlighting the mechanistic processes of eye movements to remediating basic deficient skills and then to focusing on comprehension, flexibility, and content area reading. In academic communities where the average student scores approximately 30 percentile points below the normal standard population, this latest shift away from remediation of basic skills may be inappropriate. The community college is such an academic community.

This investigation involved a survey of the extent community colleges of New Jersey in order to compile information relevant to the following questions:

1. What are the objectives for reading programs for New Jersey community colleges?

2. What are the most common materials and methods and technological equipment used to meet the specified objectives?
3. What is the relationship between literature research findings and specified objectives and materials?
4. What are the qualifications of instructions? Do they meet the standards recommended in the literature?
5. What evaluation procedures are used to improve the course presentation and contents?

Summary

The summary will be limited to a consideration of the previously stated five questions, question by question.

Question 1: The objectives of the reading programs of the surveyed community colleges of New Jersey were ranked. Average ranking were the following: comprehension; flexibility in approach to reading situations; vocabulary and work attack skills; rate; and study skills.

Question 2: The majority of respondents reported the use of a large number of workbooks and various mechanical devices, especially the controlled reader and the tachistoscope.

Question 3: The tendency of the reading courses of New Jersey community colleges to focus on comprehension and flexibility presents a very real dilemma: there seems to be a gap between the remedial needs of the typical community college student as reported in the literature and the reported program objectives of the reading programs of the New Jersey community colleges that were surveyed. Researchers and practitioners emphasize the importance of individualizing the course objectives to meet the needs of the students. In order to be able adequately to individualize and plan reading programs detailed diagnostic procedures must be followed. However, it appeared from the results of the questionnaire that the focus of most of the courses is generally upon a pre-selected group of skills and materials, usually comprehension, that proceed through a prescribed skill sequence.

Question 4: There was one instructor with an Ed.D., thirteen with M.Ed.'s, five with B.A.'s in education, and ten with at least B.A.'s in education.

Of the instructors who reported their educational backgrounds those who were trained in Reading, English, and Special Education, respectively, were the most common in the community colleges surveyed. The instructors of the reading courses in the New Jersey community colleges that were surveyed, for the most

part, seemed highly qualified.

Question 5: Seven of the thirteen respondents indicated that a formal evaluation procedure of the course by the students, by the instructors, and by others, most notably, college administrators, regularly took place. Three of the thirteen had evaluations by both students and instructors, while three others reported that there were NO evaluation procedure for the reading courses at their community colleges.

Conclusions

It appears that the goals and objectives of the community college reading programs of New Jersey need to be re-evaluated in terms of the individual students in the course as recommended by the literature review. Well-developed individualized programs can only be accomplished through the application of appropriate and thorough diagnostic procedures. This requires more than the administration of standardized survey reading tests at the beginning of each course, a practice common to the majority of the community colleges of New Jersey. Thus there is a gap between what the reading programs of the surveyed community colleges of New Jersey set as goals and what the literature-research recommends.

The evaluation procedures of the majority of reading programs seems adequate. Ten of thirteen utilize both student and instructor(s) course evaluations while six of those ten also have an outside party evaluate the course. However, three reading programs have NO evaluation procedure of the courses. This is inexcusable and should never happen. Of the three instructors who reported this lack, two did not have educational backgrounds in either Reading or English while the third respondent did not specify his field of academic training. This indicates a real need for reading instructors to have a thorough training in both diagnostic and evaluation procedures and to understand their importance in teaching reading.

Suggestions for Further Research

The questionnaire used in this survey could be further refined in the following way to give a better idea of the functioning of community colleges:

1. Asking the respondents of the institutions if remedial, developmental, and/or speed reading courses were offered;
2. Separating vocabulary and work attack skills into two separate categories in the list of objectives in question 2 and including overcoming individual deficiencies

as another objective; and

3. Asking what is the entire diagnostic procedure used for each individual student.

Some questions which need further research are the following:

1. Should objectives of community college reading programs concentrate on basic remedial needs; on skills needed in specific content areas; on flexibility in approach to reading situations; should there be different courses with different objectives, should only certain students be considered for the courses, i.e., students with an arbitrarily set IQ level or above?
2. Are there any good diagnostic instruments developed specifically for the community college population?

Some further areas which need development are:

1. Testing, and
2. Materials.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY OF READING COURSES IN NEW JERSEY COMMUNITY COLLEGES

1. Do you offer developmental reading courses for:
   A. College students Yes___ No___
   B. Business Executives Yes___ No___

2. Is the objective of the course to improve: (Rank A to F in order of importance given to each factor)
   A. Rate _____
   B. Comprehension _____
   C. Vocabulary and word attack skills _____
   D. Flexibility in approach to reading situations _____
   E. Study skills _____
   F. Other (please specify) _____

3. How are participants selected?
   A. Required course Yes___ No___
      If yes, is credit given? Yes___ No___
   B. Referral of professor Yes___ No___
   C. Self-referred Yes___ No___

4. Are pre-tests and post-tests used? Yes___ No___
   If yes, name of test _____

5. What is the length of the program?
   A. Hours per day _____
   B. Hours per week _____
   C. Hours per course _____

6. How is time spent? Please give percentages.
   A. Lecture _____
   B. Reading Exercises _____
   C. Machine _____
   D. Other, please specify _____

7. What is group size? _____ minimum _____ maximum

8. Is the program
   A. Machine oriented? Yes___ No___
   B. Book oriented? Yes___ No___
   C. Other (please specify) _____

9. What materials are used?
   A. Workbook with time exercise Yes___ No___
      Please give name and author of book _____
   B. Mechanical devices (i.e., Tachistoscope, EDL Controlled Reader, etc.) Yes___ No___
      Please name _____

10. What fee does the student pay for the course? _____

11. Is homework assigned? Yes___ No___
    If yes, how many hours? _____

12. What department is the Reading Course in?
    A. Reading development Yes___ No___
    B. English Yes___ No___
    C. Other, please specify _____

13. How many instructors teach reading courses? _____

14. In what specialities do the various instructors have their degrees? _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

15. What percentage of students initially enrolled finish the course? _____

16. Is there an evaluation of the course? Yes___ No___
    A. If yes, by students Yes___ No___
       by instructors Yes___ No___
       other, please specify _____

APPENDIX B

LETTER

I am conducting a survey of reading courses in the various Community Colleges of NJ. The results of the survey will be the data base for my Master Thesis in Education at Rutgers University.

I will mail the results of the survey to you when I have compiled the information.

Please complete the survey and return it to me as soon as possible.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Edward Kahn

APPENDIX C

LIST OF VARIOUS WORKBOOKS REPORTED IN THE SURVEY

Brown. Efficient Reading.

_____. Reading Power.

_____. Skills in Reading.

Cahill. The Urban Reader.

Cooper. Toward Better Reading Skill.

Gedamke and Krupp. Reading as Thinking.

McCall-Crabbs. Reading for Meaning.

Norman. Successful Readings: Key to Our Dynamic Society.

Sack and Yourman. 100 Passages.

SRA Reading Laboratory.

APPENDIX D

COMMUNITY COLLEGES WHO RECEIVED SURVEY

*Assumption College for Sisters
Mendham, New Jersey 07945

*Atlantic Community College
Black Horse Pike
Mays Landing, New Jersey 08330

*Bergen Community College
400 Paramus Road
Paramus, New Jersey 07652

Brookdale Community College
765 Newman Springs Road
Lincroft, New Jersey 07738

*Burlington County College
Pemberton, New Jersey 08068

*Camden County College
Blackwood, New Jersey 08012

Centenary College for Women
Hackettstown, New Jersey 07840

County College of Morris
Rt. 10 & Center Grove Road
Dover, New Jersey 07801

*Cumberland County College
Sherman Avenue
Vineland, New Jersey 08360

*St. Peters College
Hudson Terrace
Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632

Essex County College
31 Clinton Street
Newark, New Jersey 07102

Edward Williams College
150 Kotte Place
Hackensack, New Jersey 07601

*Felician College
Lodi, New Jersey 07644

*Gloucester County College
Salina and Tanyard Roads
Sewell, New Jersey 08080

*Mercer County Community College
1200 Old Trenton Road
Trenton, New Jersey 08690

*Middlesex Community College
Edison, New Jersey 08817

Monmouth College
West Long Branch, New Jersey

Ocean County College
Hooper Avenue
Toms River, New Jersey 08753

Passaic County Community College
170 Paterson Street
Paterson, New Jersey 07505

Rider College
Lawrenceville, New Jersey 08602

*Salem Community College
Penns Grove, New Jersey 08069

*Somerset County College
Somerville, New Jersey 08876

Union College
1033 Springfield Avenue
Cranford, New Jersey 07016

*Indicates that survey was returned from school.